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AMERICAN LITERATURE

THOMAS E. RANKIN
AND
WILFORD H. ASKIN

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AMERICAN LITERATURE

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PREFACE

LOWELL said that the existence of literature is the final proof that man is civilized. Literature is the reflection chiefly of things within ourselves, things of the mind and of the will. Within the past few years mankind has been enduring war, with all of its dreadful accompaniments, and has come to desire deeply new assurances that civilization has existed and still exists.

An intimate study of the literature of America reveals that the spirit of civilization, which is the art of living together, has been strong in the thought and will of the men who have lived upon this continent from the beginning of its colonization by Europeans until this day. Americans, in the main, have been distinctive among the peoples of the world for having fashioned their inner lives in accordance with the impulse to live as if all men were neighbors. This democratic spirit largely characterizes artistic production in our society, especially in the field of literature. Within recent years, as never before, events have taught the danger of the expression of pride. Yet it would be less than honorable if we were not proud to believe that this democratic spirit of American literature is the spirit upon which future civilization may best be based.

Literature is a cause as well as an effect. It is not only a reflection of what has been and is within the mind and will of man, but it is also a moving force in human society. The value, then, of the study of literature lies not alone in enjoyment of beautiful books, but as well in what it will make of a man. At no time have there been better reasons for the study of American literature than now.

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AMERICAN LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

THE COLONIAL ERA

(1607–1763)

1. Periods of Our Literature. — All books which are interesting for a long time to a large number of people belong to literature. Such books began to be written in America from the time of the first English settlement upon our shores in 1607. From that day on America has never lacked men and women able to put their thought, feeling, and imagination into attractive poetry and prose. Many changes have occurred in the life of America within the past three hundred years, and these changes have always revealed themselves in the types of great men who have busied themselves in writing books. Therefore it is possible to divide our literature into periods, as our history itself may be divided. These periods are as follows:

The Colonial Era	1607–1763
The Era of the Revolution	1763–1800
The Early Nineteenth Century	1800–1837
The Mid-Nineteenth Century	1837–1861
The Era of Nationalism	1861–1890
The Present Day	1890–....

The divisions between the periods are not quite so exact as the dates imply, for no era in history begins or ends at any exact date. Lines drawn through any year are almost as imaginary as the geographical lines drawn around the surface of the earth. But men are born in time, and their greatest activities are bounded by a small number of years,

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although some men have been fortunate enough to have lived and written within more than one period of the history of their country. It will be most convenient, and it will be logical, also, to consider all of an author's work together, even though his work may have been achieved within more than one era.

2. Historical Division of the Colonial Literature. — Captain John Smith began the Colonial Era of both life and literature. This era itself has two divisions, the dividing line coming at the year 1676. That year was notable for two events. First, the war against the Indian King Philip came to a successful close, and revealed that the northern colonies possessed the power to maintain themselves in their adopted land even against great difficulties. Second, Bacon's insurrection in Virginia, protesting against the misrule of the representatives of the English king, even so long before the Revolution, revealed that the colonies, at least those of the South, could successfully resist "taxation without representation." The American colonies by 1676 had come to feel themselves strong within, strong also in their relations with those who ruled them from across seas. New phases of thinking and feeling as well as of action began. These finally carried the people to greater and more successful efforts at showing their sense of national unity.

The Stamp Act Congress, which met in New York in 1763, by passing strong resolutions against unrepresented taxation compelled the Parliament at London to take measures for the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act. Though the Declaration of Independence was not formulated until thirteen years later, this action of the colonies made clear to all observers that America was practically an independent nation.

In the light of these facts, the first division of the Colonial Era may be considered from 1607 to 1676, and the second from 1676 to 1763.

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3. The Character of Colonial Literature. — The literature of the colonial days was intended for two groups of readers, those who lived in America and those who lived in old England. That which was intended to be read chiefly in the colonies was, for the most part, either political or theological. That which was intended for readers who lived in the older country was either news about what was going on in the colonies or arguments in defense of the character and the aims of the colonists.

The most thoughtful work of the men gifted with the ability to write well was in the books about religion and theology, as might have been expected from those who had come to this wilderness country in search of religious freedom; and in the historical and political treatises growing out of their absorbing experiences in a new world. Perhaps, though, the news-letters sent back to European friends, and the arguments addressed to both foreign friends and enemies, may have a longer life for their fine art, because they were more personal and more passionate than even the theological and political writings intended mainly for neighbors in America.

The news-letters were narrative and descriptive. They told of dangerous voyages across the Atlantic, of troubles among the colonists after arrival in America, of struggles with Indians and the thoughts of the colonists concerning those unfamiliar and unfriendly beings, of the beauty of American scenery, and of the gradual growth of civilized life in the wilds of a new land. The arguments written for readers abroad were aimed to convince Englishmen that the unfavorable reports sent back by settlers who had failed to make their fortunes here and therefore were disappointed in the new country, were false and evil reports.

Most of the writing during this era was in the form of prose. A great deal was fanciful in subject matter, yet lacked imagination and artistic skill. It is the literature of

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fact which has survived from that day, rather than that of fancy, and nearly all of the prose of the time far surpassed in quality the verse.

FIRST PERIOD (1607–1676)

4. Temporary, and Permanent Americans. — The writers of the first seventy years of the colonial period fall into two groups: those like Captain Smith, who were temporary residents in America, and those like Roger Williams, who became permanent American citizens. Of the second group some were not born in America, but were transplanted Englishmen; yet, when once settled here, they became real "dyed-in-the-wool" Americans. Even if we may grant that the writings of the men who lived here only temporarily were writings *about* America or even simply *from* America, still no one can question that the writings of the men in the second group belong definitely to American literature.

The authors of importance who lived and wrote in America between 1607 and 1676 but who resided here only a short time, were Captain John Smith, George Percy, William Strachey, John Pory, George Sandys, Nathaniel Ward, John Josselyn, William Wood, John Hammond, and George Alsop. All these, excepting Nathaniel Ward, John Josselyn, and William Wood, lived either in Virginia or in Maryland; Ward lived in Virginia for a time, though longer in New England. The authors who were born in America, or who took up permanent residence here, were Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, Michael Wigglesworth, John Winthrop, William Bradford, Roger Williams, Daniel Gookin, Thomas Morton, and Alexander Whitaker. With the exception of Alexander Whitaker, who lived at Jamestown, Virginia, all these were New Englanders.

5. Captain John Smith. — During the time of his residence in Virginia, Captain John Smith wrote three books: (1) *A True Relation of Virginia;* (2) *A Letter of Explana-*

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tion to the Proprietors of the Virginia Company; and (3) *A Map of the Bay and Rivers, with an annexed Relation of the countries, and nations that inhabit them.* The first of these is the earliest product of English authorship in North America. This and the third one were written to send home news of the colony. The second was written in a spirit of annoyance and of defense, a spirit which grew more and more strong in the missives which continued to be sent back to the mother country.

Captain John Smith

Captain Smith was the kind of man of letters much admired in a later day by Henry Thoreau; he could be a man of action all day long, and after the day's work could use his brain, — a man with calloused hand but clear head. Smith had a tendency in his writings to "draw the long bow," though his stories were always well told. He said of his own works, "This history might and ought to have been clad in better robes than my rude military hand can cut out in paper ornaments; but, because of the most things herein I am no compiler by hearsay but have been a real actor, I take myself to have a property in them, and therefore have been bold enough to challenge them to come under the reach of my rough pen."

6. ***A True Relation of Virginia*** was printed in 1608, the year of the birth of John Milton. It is a simple account of

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the things which occurred before the eyes of the author during the first thirteen months after his arrival at Jamestown. Captain Smith showed his skill in rejecting what was of no story interest, and in making the most of all that he selected to tell. The book relates the struggles of the settlement with unfriendly Indians, with disease, and with the lazy members of the colony. It tells of exploring and foraging expeditions made by the author, the most interesting of which are those bringing Smith into adventurous touch with the Emperor Powhatan.

7. *A Letter of Explanation,* Smith's second work, fiercely criticized the company which owned the land of the colony by royal grant, and tersely explained the deplorable condition of affairs at Jamestown. It was not quite a declaration of independence; though its urgent and wrathful demand for an understanding startled those to whom it was addressed. In the book, Smith impatiently insisted that the company must not expect two or three thousand pounds of money for less than one hundred invested, and that the company ought to send over to Virginia thirty respectable workmen rather than a thousand lazy "gentlemen." Yet the writer adds, "I humbly entreat your pardons if I offend you with my rude answer."

8. *Map,* and *Relation.* — In the *Map, with an annexed Relation,* the flora and fauna, the climate and topographical features, of Virginia are described, and much information is given concerning the characteristics of the Indians. It radiates the quaint humor which was profuse in English literature of the seventeenth century. There are many interesting passages about Powhatan. It would seem that the Indian Emperor was in one respect like Frederic William of Prussia a century later, for, says Captain Smith, "About his person ordinarily attended guard of forty or fifty of the tallest men his country doth afford. . . . Every night upon the four quarters of his house are four sentinels, each from

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other a slight shoot, and every half hour one from the *corps de garde* doth halloo, shaking his lips with his fingers between them; unto whom every sentinel doth answer round from his stand. If any fail, they presently send forth an officer that beateth him extremely."

Smith writes of the passion of the Indians for decoration: "In each ear commonly they have three great holes, whereat they hang chains, bracelets, or copper. Some of their men wear in those holes a small green and yellow colored snake, near half a yard in length, which, crawling and lapping itself about his neck, oftentimes would familiarly kiss his lips. Others wear a dead rat by the tail." Evidently Smith found persimmons in Virginia, for he tells of a "plum" called Putchamins, which before it is ripe "will draw a man's mouth awry with much torment."

Not all of John Smith's readers in the old country took his stories without a grain of salt. In a famous book called *Worthies of England*, Thomas Fuller sarcastically remarked that Smith "alone is the herald to publish and proclaim" his mighty dangers and mightier deeds. Ben Jonson, however, and other dramatists of the later Shakespearean days, were glad to draw episodes for their plays from his tales.

9. George Percy. — Of George Percy's writings only a fragment has survived, and that because it was printed in England in a book of journeys compiled chiefly by a man named Samuel Purchas and entitled *Purchas's Pilgrims*. George Percy was brother of the Earl of Northumberland. Though a brave and patient man, he felt most keenly the contrast between the miseries of the settlers in Virginia and the comforts of the days when he had been at home in England. No one has pictured more graphically those first few months away from Europe. Three sentences will suffice to suggest what their horrors were: "Thus we lived for the space of five months in this miserable distress, not having

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five able men to man our bulwarks upon any occasion. If it had not pleased God to put a terror in the savages' hearts, we had all perished by those cruel and wild pagans, being in that weak estate as we were; our men night and day groaning in every corner of the sort most pitiful to hear. If there were any conscience in men, it would make their hearts bleed to hear the pitiful murmurings and outcries of our sick men, without relief night and day for the space of six weeks; some departing out of the world, many times three or four in a night, in the morning their bodies trailed out of their cabins like dogs, to be buried."

10. William Strachey. — In May of 1610, two small vessels, all that remained of nine that together had set sail from England, entered the James River. On board one of these was William Strachey. In July of that year Strachey sent back to England a manuscript entitled, in the manner of the seventeenth century, *A True Reportory of the Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Kt., upon and from the islands of the Bermudas; his coming to Virginia; and the estate of the colony then and after under the government of Lord La Ware.* The most interesting parts of this book relate to the shipwreck of the fleet on the rocks of the Bermudas. Some critics think that the reference to the Bermudas in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* was suggested by passages in Strachey's book. One passage ends as follows:

> By the mercy of God unto us, making out our boats, we had ere night brought all our men, women, and children . . . safe into the island. We found it to be the dangerous and dreaded island, or islands, of the Bermudas. . . . They be so terrible to all that ever touched on them, and such tempests, thunders, and other fearful objects are seen and heard about them, that they be commonly called the Devil's Islands, and are feared and avoided of all travelers alive, above any other place in the world; . . . it being counted of most that they be no habitation for men, but rather given over to devils and wicked spirits.

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To-day such a description reads strangely to those Americans who find in the Bermudas one of the most delightful places for a winter vacation.

11. The Work of John Pory, who had been a member of the English Parliament, and had come to Virginia in 1619, is less important than that of Smith, Percy, or Strachey. Yet it is attractive because of its spirited accounts of the character of the North American Indians. Pory tells of an Indian king called Namenacus, who was as crafty as he was murderously treacherous. "He led us into a thicket where, all sitting down, he showed his naked breast, asking if we saw any deformity upon it. We told him 'No.' 'No more,' said he, 'is the inside, but as sincere and pure. Therefore come freely to my country, and welcome.'"

12. George Sandys. — Another temporary resident of early colonial Virginia, gifted with literary grace, was George Sandys, a son of the Archbishop of York, and, therefore, accustomed to the luxuries and refinements of rich and noble society. He became a professional writer, a scholar, and a poet. He was also a practical man, for in the midst of his literary labors in the Virginia colony he built an iron works and had charge of a mill. Before coming to America in 1621, Sandys had translated from the Latin five of the fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. During the four years of his residence at Jamestown, he translated the remaining ten books of Ovid, and in 1625 took them to England for publication. This translation was praised by such competent judges as Thomas Fuller, John Dryden, and Alexander Pope. The Latin was faithfully done into idiomatic and musical English verse. This highly accomplished scholar and distinguished poet seems to have been, while here, as true an American as any of that day.

13. *The Simple Cobbler of Agawam.* — Nathaniel Ward came to America in 1634 and remained twelve years. By profession he had been first a lawyer, then a clergyman, and

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was also an extensive traveler even before his journey to the new world. His leaving England for America was due to a sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him by William Laud, then Bishop of London, afterwards the infamous Archbishop Laud. Ward became minister to a small settlement of Puritans at Agawam, the modern Ipswich. While serving this congregation, he wrote a book as remarkably intolerant as anything his persecutor could have written, but withal a very amusing book, *The Simple Cobbler of Agawam*. A part, only, of the title, in present-day spelling, is "The Simple Cobbler of Agawam in America: willing to help mend his native country, lamentably tattered both in the upper-leather and sole, with all the honest stitches he can take. . . . It is his trade to patch all the year long gratis. Therefore I pray you, gentlemen, keep your purses."

Ward began with the assertion that "The truths of God are the pillars of the world." To him, as it turns out, the "truths of God" are only those known to Nathaniel Ward. All English civilization he thinks in a bad way, that it can be mended best by showing no toleration to the wretched people who will dare dispute the exact truths which he announces. He proposes to abolish all fashions, all sports, and all frivolities of men, and especially those of women. Still, with all his intolerance, Ward was a courageous man; and, excepting for his constant tendency to punning, he wrote well.

14. Two Early "Scientists." — Two of the writers of early New England were of importance to the scientific world of that time, though in our day they would be called "nature-fakers." Their work was vigorous, and to the marvelous appearance of the forms of nature in America, so new to Englishmen, they were keenly alive. One of these writers was John Josselyn; the other, William Wood. Josselyn's description of the Pilhannaw, whatever that was, reveals his

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brilliant "literatesque" gifts, — "a monstrous bird, four times as big as a goshawk, white-mailed, having two or three purple feathers in her head as long as geese's feathers; her head as big as a child's a year old; a very princely bird. When she soars abroad, all sorts of feathered creatures hide themselves; yet she never preys upon any of them, but upon fawns and jackals. She aeries in the woods upon the high hills of Ossapy."

Unlike Josselyn, William Wood made no claim to being a scientist. Yet Wood's description of the out-of-door world must have been nearer the truth than the musically worded pictures of Josselyn. Of New England Indians, Wood writes that they were "between five and six feet high, straight-bodied, strongly composed, smooth-skinned, merry-countenanced, of complexion somewhat more swarthy than Spaniards, black-haired, high-foreheaded, black-eyed, out-nosed, broad-shouldered, brawny-armed, long-and-slender-handed, out-breasted, small-waisted, lank-bellied, well-thighed, flat-kneed, handsome-grown legs, and small feet. In a word, take them when the blood brisks in their veins, when the flesh is on their backs, and marrow in their bones, when they frolic in their antique deportments and Indian postures, and they are more amiable to behold (though only in Adam's livery) than many a compounded fantastic in the newest fashion. . . . But a sagamore with a humbird in his ear for a pendant, a black hawk on his occiput for his plume, mowhackees for his gold chain, good store of wampompeage begirting his loins, his bow in his hand, his quiver at his back, with six naked Indian spatter-lashes at his heels for his guard, thinks himself little inferior to the great Chan; he will not stick to say, he is all one with King Charles. He thinks he can blow down castles with his breath, and conquer kingdoms with his conceit."

15. John Hammond; George Alsop. — Two other temporary residents, of less importance, were John Hammond,

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who lived for a time in Virginia, then in Maryland, and George Alsop, who spent all of his sojourn in Maryland. Hammond's little book, *Leah and Rachel* (Virginia and Maryland were intended), was a close study of social conditions in the colonies as compared with worse conditions in England. Alsop's book was entitled *A Character of the Province of Maryland.* "A Character" meant a description of the characteristics of the colony described. This book, crammed with scintillating and vigorous humor, was intended to clear away English misapprehensions and misunderstandings about the Maryland colony.

16. Permanent Americans. — We have seen that nearly all the men of letters who came to America during the first years of the Colonial Era and remained but a brief time were members of the southern colonies. On the other hand, the writers who took up permanent residence were all New Englanders, with but two exceptions. These two were Daniel Gookin and Alexander Whitaker; and Gookin also for a brief while lived in New England, after he was expelled from Virginia. The New Englanders were Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, Michael Wigglesworth, John Winthrop, William Bradford, Roger Williams, and Thomas Morton.

17. ***The Bay Psalm Book*** **(1640)** was the first book printed in the British American colonies, though a printing press had been set up in the city of Mexico at least a hundred years earlier. The full title of this grotesque and at times ridiculous travesty of the sublimely beautiful versicles of the ancient Hebrew Psalms was *The Whole Book of Psalms, faithfully translated into English Metre.* It contained no real poetry, not even good verse, yet wielded a good deal of influence among the devoutly religious people of the Massachusetts Bay colony.

18. Mrs. Anne Bradstreet. — In 1650 a book of American verse appeared in London, which contained some real poetry. It was the work of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, wife of Governor

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Samuel Bradstreet, and ancestress of Richard Henry Dana, Wendell Phillips, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Most of the verses in Mrs. Bradstreet's book are not poetry; they are rhymed history, metrical theology, and versified discussions of politics, even of physics. In the field of poetry in 1650 we could hardly expect much of high value from America, since even Italy, Spain, France, and England were then producing few books of excellence. New England was still crude, wild, and inhospitable to all fine arts.

Mrs. Bradstreet's book was called *The Tenth Muse, lately sprung up in America.* It contained one poem, "The Four Monarchies," which was of educative value to the New Englanders. This was a rhymed story of ancient history, following the facts as set down in Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World.* Another poem, and a better one, was "Contemplations." More than one passage is worth quoting, but the following will, perhaps, justify the belief that in a more mellow environment its author might have become at least a good minor poet:

> O Time, the fatal wrack of mortal things,
> That draws oblivion's curtains over kings;
> Their sumptuous monuments, men know them not;
> Their names without a record are forgot;
> Their parts, their ports, their pomps, all laid i' the dust;
> Nor wit, nor gold, nor buildings, 'scape time's rust.
> But he whose name is graved in the white stone
> Shall last and shine, when all of these are gone.

19. Michael Wigglesworth was more widely read and more highly honored in his day than the early poetess whose efforts we have just described. He was the author of a number of short and three longer poems, the most admired being "The Day of Doom." This claimed to be "A poetical description of the great and last judgment." It was immensely popular, because it so acceptably expressed the Puritan ideas then prevalent concerning the future physical

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happiness of the saved and the physical tortures of those who at the Day of Doom were to be condemned forever. The pictures delineated in the tense diction of this poem are lurid indeed, the author delighting chiefly in contemplating the eternal woes of the damned. Wigglesworth was described by Cotton Mather as "a little, feeble shadow of a man"; but, for all his weak body, he had a powerful imagination, with a genius for picturesque phrasing, and a profound sincerity of belief that what he was picturing would inevitably come true. His idea of God, however, was terrible and repulsive. Only one touch of pity appears in the whole of this "blazing and sulphurous poem." This momentary softening of the attitude of the being whom the author conceived to be the Deity occurred when, at the separation of those to be rewarded from those to be punished, the infant children are considered, and their pleading causes the Judge to rule that

> You sinners are; and such a share
> As sinners may expect
> Such you shall have, for I do save
> None but my elect.
> Yet, to compare your sin with their
> Who lived a longer time,
> I do confess yours is much less,
> Though every sin's a crime.
>
> A crime it is; therefore in bliss
> You may not hope to dwell;
> But unto you I shall allow
> The easiest room in hell.

To us it seems strange that more copies of this poem were sold, in proportion to the number of people in America, than of any other book since printed in this country, and that for an entire century there was a great demand for it. No wonder that Nathaniel Hawthorne and others who have written of the Puritan age have found that age terribly

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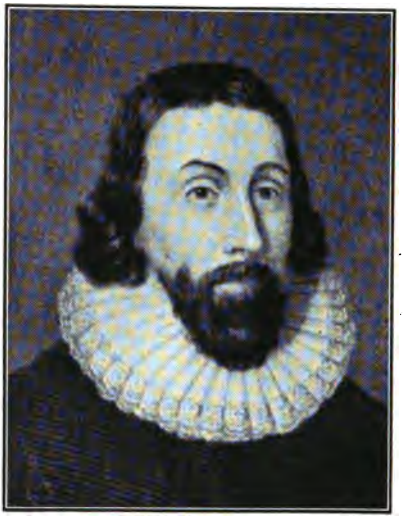
earnest, sad, somber, deeply shadowed in its spiritual life, and, at times, execrable and odious in its narrowness.

20. John Winthrop, a most sedate man both in the events of his life and in his writings, was the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony. The *History of New England* which he wrote was a historical diary rather than what we are now accustomed to call "History." Like most New England men of the seventeenth century, Winthrop deeply interested himself in achieving things rather than in writing about them. He recorded events not for their own sake or for the joy of authorship, but only for their effect upon the lives of men. Day by day, from 1630 to 1649, he made full note of actual events which came under his observation, and of some imagined ones which did not. No doubt he tried to set down a clear and true story of the life of his community. Nothing was too insignificant, — "A cow died at Plymouth, and a goat at Boston, with eating Indian corn." Nothing was too fantastic, — "About midnight three men coming in a boat to Boston, saw two lights arise out of the waters near the north point of the town cove, in form like a man, and went a small distance to the town, and so to the south point, and there vanished away. . . . A light like the moon arose about the north-east point in Boston, and met the former



John Winthrop

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at Nottle's Island, and there they clozed in one, and then parted, and loosed and parted divers times, and so went over the hill in the island and vanished. . . . About the same time a voice was heard upon the water between Boston and Dorchester, calling out in a most dreadful manner, 'Boy! boy! come away! come away!' and it suddenly shifted from one place to another a great distance about twenty times. It was heard by divers godly persons."

Alden House

21. William Bradford. — The second governor of a neighboring colony, that of Plymouth, was William Bradford. Plymouth was the first settlement of English-speaking people on this continent that endured. Bradford was the first author whom we can accurately call an American historian. He was the "father of American history." Others had named their writings "histories," but their books were not sufficiently accurate, however interesting. Bradford began his *History of Plymouth Plantation* in 1622, and worked upon it until 1646. This book he proposed to write "in a plain style, with singular regard unto the simple truth in all things." And he did write in a plain style, truthfully telling the facts about events in which he had a large share, and forcefully defending his new country against the dissatisfied who were sending abroad discrediting reports.

Bradford tells of the persecution of the dissenters from

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the established church in England, of their removal to Holland, of their journey thence across the vast Atlantic, of the founding of Plymouth, and of its history for twenty-six following years. Of the departure from Leyden, Holland, he says, — "So they left that godly and pleasant city which had been their resting place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits." Again, when he has been annoyed by complaints of petty troubles within the colony, even to grumblings concerning insect pests, he writes that "They are too delicate, and unfit to begin new plantations and colonies, that cannot endure the biting of a mosquito. We would wish such to keep at home till at least they be mosquito-proof."

Bradford's book had a strange history. At his death, he left it in manuscript. When British troops were in Boston in 1775 and 1776, the manuscript, which was then in the library of Old South Church, disappeared. It was discovered in 1855, in England in a library owned by the Bishop of London.

With another passenger upon the Mayflower, Edward Winslow by name, Bradford kept a journal from the ninth of November, 1620, for a little more than thirteen months. One of the interesting passages in that journal is this:

"About midnight we heard a great and hideous cry; and our sentinels called 'Arm! Arm!' So we bestirred ourselves, and shot off a couple of muskets, and the noise ceased. We concluded that it was a company of wolves or foxes; for one told us he had heard such a noise in Newfoundland. About five o'clock in the morning we began to be stirring. . . . After prayer we prepared ourselves for breakfast and for a journey; and, it being now the twilight in the morning, it was thought meet to carry the things down to the shallop. . . . As it fell out, the water not being high enough, they laid the things down upon the shore and came up to breakfast. Anon, all upon a sudden, we heard a great and strange cry, which we knew to be the same voices, though they varied their notes. One

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of our company being abroad, came running in, and cried, 'They are men! Indians! Indians!' and withal their arrows came flying amongst us. Our men ran out with all speed to recover their arms. . . . In the meantime, Captain Miles Standish, having a snaphance ready, made a shot, and after him another. After they two had shot, other two of us were ready; but he wished us not to shoot till we could take aim, for we knew not what need we should have. . . . Our care was no less for the shallop. . . . We called unto them to know how it was with them; and they answered 'Well! Well!' every one, and 'be of good courage!' . . . The cry of our enemies was dreadful. . . . Their note was after this manner, 'Woach, woach, ha ha hach woach.' There was a lusty man, and no whit less valiant, who was thought to be their captain, stood behind a tree within half a musket-shot of us, and there let his arrows fly at us. He was seen to shoot three arrows, which were all avoided; for he at whom the first arrow was aimed, saw it, and stooped down, and it flew over him. The rest were avoided also. He stood three shots of a musket. At length, one took, as he said, full aim at him; after which he gave an extraordinary cry, and away they went all. We followed them about a quarter of a mile. . . . Then we shouted all together two several times, and shot off a couple of muskets and so returned. This we did that they might see that we were not afraid of them, nor discouraged. Thus it pleased God to vanquish our enemies and give us deliverance."

22. Roger Williams. — Nathaniel Ward of Agawam (whose work we have already described) had written, "He that is willing to tolerate any religion or discrepant way of religion, besides his own, unless it be in matters merely indifferent, either doubts of his own, or is not sincere in it. . . . It is said that men ought to have liberty of their conscience, and that it is persecution to debar them of it. . . . Let all the wits under the heavens lay their heads together and find an assertion worse than this (one excepted) and I will petition to be chosen the universal idiot of the world." Quite the opposite of such opinions were those expressed by Roger Williams, founder of the city of Providence, Rhode Island, and the first advocate on this continent of full and absolute liberty of conscience.

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Williams will always be venerated for his formulation of the doctrine that the civil power has no jurisdiction over the conscience, or, to put it more simply, that the state has no right to interfere with the religious opinions of its subjects. That the opinions of one man do not concern another had been one of the great principles of the Reformation in Europe during the sixteenth century; but all Europe had been so deeply influenced at that time by the spirit of compromise that few persons fully accepted the principle. Since the Reformation almost no one had been willing to believe that no man has the right to make another uncomfortable about his religious opinions. It was that right that Roger Williams expounded in his principle of "liberty of conscience."

Coming from England in 1631, Williams found that the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay had no welcome for a man who refused to believe that the civil officers had the right to interfere in matters of conscience. Just as he had been expelled from England by Laud, so he was now driven from Salem, Massachusetts, by the "lords brethren," as intolerant men as the lords bishops of the old country. He went straightway to Plymouth, where Governor Bradford generously welcomed him. After two years at Plymouth he returned to take up his ministry again at Salem, but the general court of Massachusetts Bay Colony attempted to have him seized and sent back to England. Williams eluded the magistrates, and founded Providence, giving his colony that name in remembrance of the help from God in time of distress. Williams made this little town a haven not only for those fleeing religious persecution in Europe, but also for all who were persecuted in other American colonies.

Roger Williams's chief work was *The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.* All his works are of importance because of the doctrine which he advocated, —

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that no man and no government has the right to meddle with any one's conscience. To the reader of to-day the works of Williams are not attractive. Their style is crude, only an occasional sentence rewarding the labor of reading, as when Williams praises "that life which is eternal when this poor minute's dream is over," or asserts "I fear not so much iron and steel as the cutting of our throats with golden knives."

We must not think that the teachings of Roger Williams were new in the world. Ages of intellectual toil had endeavored to express his plea for liberty of the soul; but in his day, he almost alone stood for intellectual freedom. Even John Milton's *Areopagitica*, published in the same year as Williams's leading work, demanded the doing away with such freedom in matters of the soul as the followers of the Pope were then allowed to have in England, which was little, indeed. Roger Williams's character was as heroic as Milton's, and he surpassed the great Puritan in charity and tolerance.

23. Daniel Gookin. — Though it is true and deplorable that the literature of the American colonies lacked finish, yet it expressed some of the most influential ideas of all time, and stated them in a highly original way. Roger Williams's idea of freedom of conscience was one of these. Another is contained in John Winthrop's definition of liberty, set forth in the second volume of his *History of New England*, too long to quote here, but found on pages 279 to 282 of that volume. A third far-reaching idea, that of "no taxation without representation," was originated in this form of statement by Daniel Gookin, who was expelled from Virginia for not conforming to the teachings of the Episcopal Church which was established there, but who found welcome even among Massachusetts Puritans. From 1644 until the year of his death, 1687, Gookin contended for his belief in no taxation without representation. He was a

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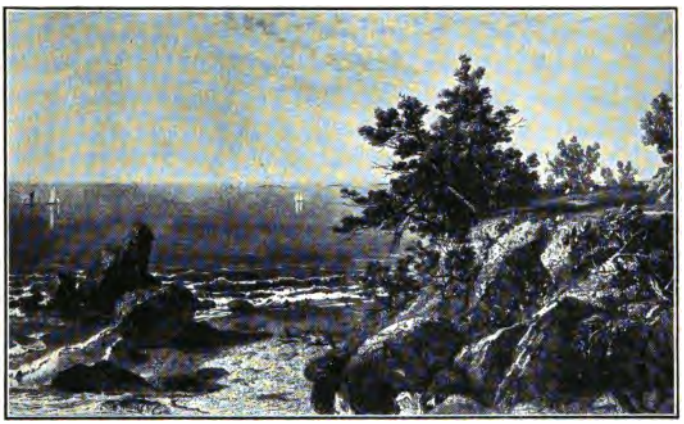
great power, particularly for the people as against the tyrannical royal governor, Edmund Andros. Yet Gookin wrote principally in behalf of the suffering Indians of New England. Even during the struggle with King Philip, he maintained that the Indians who had become Christianized had passed far beyond their teachers in living the graces of Christianity.

24. Thomas Morton. — Upon the shores of Boston Bay there was one author less acceptable to the Puritans than



On the New England Coast

even Roger Williams. His name was Thomas Morton. Not content to argue with the civil and religious officers of the colony about civil liberty and theological doctrines, he insisted upon the right to compose and circulate witty lampoons upon those sombre and over-grave gentlemen. Hence he was shipped away to old England. He returned, though, and died somewhere upon the coast of Maine. Morton's *New English Canaan*, published in 1637, contained, besides lampoons upon his enemies, exaggerated descriptions of New England scenery, climate, flora, and fauna. Perhaps

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the author was a trifle ironic at times, as well as given to exaggeration, for of the climate he wrote, "No man living there (on Boston Bay) was ever known to be troubled with a cold or cough, . . . how many men coming sick out of Virginia have instantly recovered with the help of the purity of the aire."

25. Alexander Whitaker, a clergyman who came to Jamestown about four years after the founding of that settlement, published in 1616 his *Good News from Virginia.* The principal purpose of this book was to arouse interest in the necessity and duty of Christianizing the Indians in Virginia. "Awake," the author urged, "you true-hearted Englishmen; remember that the plantation is God's and the reward your country's."

Among the men who ministered to the churches of the colonies, especially in New England, a few were truly great. Some of them were acknowledged to be great in the Old World before they came to the New, — such men as Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, and John Cotton. Yet though they were men of high intellectual worth and of deep seriousness, their writing was nearly all in sermon form and of such technical theological nature that it is quite unreadable to most people of to-day. We can hardly give the name of literature to that which fails, in both style and meaning, to transmit itself to either the understanding or the delight of future generations.

SECOND PERIOD (1676–1763)

26. Three Geographical Groups. — From what has been said thus far concerning authorship in the English colonies in America before 1676, it is plain that there was not much refined and polished workmanship in the writing done upon our strand and within our forests. But there was little time for refinement, —

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The need that pressed sorest
Was to vanquish the seasons, the ocean, the forest.

We find even fewer important writers during the second part of the Colonial Era, after 1676, than during the first. Yet when two are mentioned, Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin, no one can deny that here at last are two genuine Americans notable for their contributions to the life and thought of the whole world. Perhaps this could not be truthfully said of any of the writers, excepting Roger Williams, during the first half of the colonial time, and even Williams was not native-born.

The American colonial writers between the years 1676 and 1763 divide themselves into three geographical groups. In Virginia were William Byrd, Robert Beverley, and the unknown author of the *Burwell Papers*. In New England were Samuel Sewall, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards. In Pennsylvania lived and wrote Thomas Godfrey and Benjamin Franklin, though by birth Franklin was of New England.

The Virginians

By 1676 the colonists were becoming less anxious than before to seem like the residents of old England; and therefore they imitated them less in their writing. Also, since the colonists were becoming farther removed in blood relationship from Englishmen, they no longer felt so strong an impulse to write "news" back to the earlier home. The outside pressure, then, for the production of books was less than before 1676. There was much demand in the colonies themselves for sermonizing and for political oratory, and the supply of both was abundant; but there were fewer men of high intellectual power and of grandeur of mind than during the earlier period.

27. The *Burwell Papers*. — Such an influential event as the insurrection in Virginia under the leadership of Nathaniel

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Bacon in 1676 might be expected to call forth powerful and interesting writing. And it did, in the *Burwell Papers*, so named because they were made public by a family of that name in whose possession they were found at a later date. These *Papers* told in racy and sympathetic style the story of the insurrection, and revealed the profound effect of the love and loyalty Bacon had inspired among the people. Governor William Berkeley had said, "I thank God there are no free schools, nor printing; and I hope we shall not have these hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both." It was on account of such an attitude of mind among those in civil authority that the *Burwell Papers* were then circulated clandestinely and in manuscript only.

28. William Byrd, the genial president of the council of Virginia, left three valuable papers now known as the *Byrd Manuscripts*. Byrd, born in Virginia, 1674, and dying there in 1744, was a wealthy and cultured man, owning the largest library in the Virginia colony, and, in his famous "Westover Mansion," one of the finest residences in all the colonies.

The most interesting of the three manuscripts by William Byrd (not published in full until 1866) was *The History of the Dividing Line.* This is a record of Byrd's experience and of his clever thoughts while directing, in 1729, a survey of the dividing line between Virginia and North Carolina. It is humorous throughout, often sarcastic. While the author's sarcasm is directed almost exclusively against the backwardness of civilization in the colony of North Carolina, yet his nimble mind and facile pen cannot resist attacking his own colony also, especially the conditions of its earlier days. For example, he says of the original colony at Jamestown that it consisted of "about an hundred men,

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most of them reprobates of good families." He says also that the Jamestown settlers, "like true Englishmen, built a church that cost no more than fifty pounds, and a tavern that cost five hundred." He thinks that the first colonists should have intermarried with the Indians, for "Morals and all considered, I can't think the Indians were much greater heathens than the first adventurers, who, had they been good Christians, would have had the charity to take this only method of converting the natives to Christianity. . . . Besides, the poor Indians would have had less reason to complain that the English took away their land, if they had received it by way of portion with their daughters. . . . Nor would the shade of the skin have been any reproach at this day; for if a Moor may be washed white in three generations, surely an Indian might have been blanched in two." He thought that the irreligion which he found in North Carolina was the worst feature of the life there. When a chaplain from Virginia conducted a religious service in North Carolina, it "was quite a new thing to our brethren of North Carolina, who live in a climate where no clergyman can breathe, any more than spiders in Ireland." This man had a witty and facile style, though he reveals little depth of thinking and rises to no high and sustained imaginative expression.

29. Robert Beverley. — The first and most interesting historian of Virginia was Robert Beverley, whose father had come from England in 1676 and had been an ardent supporter of Governor Berkeley against Nathaniel Bacon's insurrection. The son was born in the colony; but he became as strong an opponent of the colonial governors as his father had been a supporter of them. He was a most free-minded man, and an accomplished and animated writer. His book, the *History and Present State of Virginia*, was published in 1705. The author was a sharp and effective phrase-maker, knowing how to be both gently charitable and crisply sar-

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castic. His strongest sarcasms were directed against Governor Nicholson, whose chief crime, according to Beverley, was "the detestable politics of governing by parties," a practice by no means uncommon in the politics of nations and commonwealths of to-day.

The New Englanders

30. Samuel Sewall. — In New England the great names during this second half of the Colonial Era were Samuel Sewall, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards. Samuel Sewall, born in 1652 at Horton, England, for a time the home of John Milton, died in Massachusetts in 1730. Sewall was one of the colonial judges, cool, calm, and serene, excepting when the terrible epidemic of witch-craft fear swept even the jurists to madness. He was a wise friend to the Indians, and a strong and fearless antagonist of slavery, — which existed in those days in New England. Judge Sewall was honest enough to confess his error in condemning to death those who had been accused of witch-craft, and humble enough to do penance publicly, with bared head, one day each year in coldest winter season. He wrote the best private diary of colonial times, though perhaps his keenest piece of writing was his tract, *The Selling of Joseph.* It contained, as early as 1700, a splendid statement against slavery in America. One of the finest sentiments in this pamphlet was "Liberty is in real value next unto life; none ought to part with it himself or deprive others of it, but upon most mature consideration." Of this colonial judge John G. Whittier, in the nineteenth century, wrote:

Stately and slow, with thoughtful air,
His black cap hiding his whitened hair,
Walks the Judge of the great Assize,
Samuel Sewall, the good and wise.
His face with lines of firmness wrought,
He wears the look of a man unbought,
Who swears to his hurt and changes not;

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Yet touched and softened nevertheless
With the grace of Christian gentleness;
The face that a child would climb to kiss;
True and tender and brave and just,
That man might honor and woman trust.

31. Cotton Mather. — From 1663 to 1728 there lived in New England "the great Cotton Mather," as he was known to those who lived in his day, a man whose never-ceasing desire was to be immensely "fruitful" in his writings, but whose motto for other people was "Be Short!" Cotton Mather was a most learned man, for those days, and an ardent student of many languages. He said of himself that he was "able with little study to write in seven languages." Yet with all his learning, he was grotesquely superstitious, as appears in page after page of his ponderous work on the ecclesiastical history of New England. He was not only blindly and ludicrously superstitious, but even when it came to recording real events he jumbled fact with fiction. This has been unfortunate for the student of our early history, for it is upon Mather's writings that we have to depend for what little is to be learned about a large number of the great men of New England and what they did and wrote.

Cotton Mather's most famous book — indeed whether it deserved the fame or not, the most famous of all the books of the pre-Revolutionary days, with the exception of those of Franklin and Edwards — was called *Magnalia Christi Americana; or, The Ecclesiastical History of New England from its first planting, in the year* 1620, *unto the year of our Lord,* 1698. This was but one of three hundred and eighty-eight separate writings which he published during his lifetime! Mather, an indefatigable worker, read a vast number of books, the contents of which were stored in his prodigious memory. His life covered a wide range of experiences. The fruits of all this ability and study and experience he

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poured into his own books. He was extremely conceited and very pedantic, loving monstrously long and involved sentences, filling them with classic allusions and quotations, strained analogies, and imagery which he could not make fit. He himself said that all men who are governed by reason will think "that the real excellency of a book will never lie in saying of little." Mather's judgments of men were usually absurd; he would write of New England ministers as if they were the greatest men that ever lived (they included himself), and then of Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher and scientist, as that "muddy-headed pagan."

An illustration of the readiness of this author to believe *anything* is his account of the "wonderful providence" which kept from starvation a company of people who were aboard a New Haven sloop. It appears that they were pious folk, and so God sent dolphins to attend them upon their journey:

> Of these they caught one every day, which was eno' to serve 'em: only on Saturdays they still catch'd a Couple: and on the Lord's Day, they could catch none at all. With all possible skill and care they could not supply themselves with the fish in any other number or order; and indeed with an holy blush at last they left off trying to do anything on the Lord's Days. . . . Thus did the Lord keep feeding a company that put their trust in him, as he did Israel with his manna: and this they continued until the dolphins came to that change of water, where they wi'd to leave the vessels. Then they so strangely surrendered themselves that the Company took 27 of 'em; which no' only suffic'd them until they came ashore, but also some of 'em were brought ashore dry'd, as a monument of the Divine Benignity.

32. Jonathan Edwards. — One of the keenest and most profound thinkers America has yet produced was Jonathan Edwards. His birthplace was Windsor, Connecticut, 1703. He was graduated from Yale College, became a tutor there, was a preacher for twenty-four years at Northampton, then a missionary to the Indians who lived around Stockbridge, and while at Stockbridge wrote his greatest book, a treatise

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entitled *Freedom of the Will.* In 1758 Edwards was made president of Princeton College. He died at Princeton, New Jersey, a few weeks after taking up his duties as president of the college.

Most of the ministers and educators of the colonial days were pedants; but Edwards did not merely accumulate erudite information; he was a great thinker. Many have called him the greatest of theologians, not only in America but in the entire world. His theology was of a terrible sort; yet he was one of the gentlest of men. His mind had the breadth of the greatest of men, and the sympathy of the most tender of women. His writing was the purest and best Puritan prose that New England produced. Did ever any other boy of less than twelve years of age write so modestly and yet so well as Jonathan Edwards in the following part of a letter sent to an English gentleman who was a friend of Edwards's father?

Jonathan Edwards

May it please your Honor, there are some things that I have happily seen of the wondrous way of the working of the spider. Although everything belonging to this insect is admirable, there are some phenomena relating to them more particularly wonderful. Everybody that is used to the country knows their marching in the air from one tree to another, sometimes at the distance of five or six rods. Nor can one go out in a dewy morning, at the latter end of August and the beginning of September, but he shall see multitudes of webs, made visible by the dew that hangs on them, reach-

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ing from one tree, branch, and shrub to another. . . . But these webs may be seen well enough in the daytime by an observing eye, by their reflection in the sunbeams. Especially, late in the afternoon may these webs that are between the eye and that part of the horizon that is under the sun, be seen very plainly, being advantageously posited to reflect the rays. And the spiders themselves may be very often seen traveling in the air, from one stage to another amongst the trees, in a very unaccountable manner. But I have often seen that which is much more astonishing. In very calm and serene days in the forementioned time of year standing at some distance behind the end of an house or some other opaque body, so as just to hide the disk of the sun and keep off his dazzling rays, and looking along close by the side of it, I have seen a vast multitude of little shining webs, and glistening strings, brightly reflecting the sunbeams, and some of them of great length, and of such a height that one would think they were tacked to the vault of heaven, and would be burnt like tow in the sun. . . . But that which is most astonishing is that very often appear at the ends of these webs spiders sailing in the air with them. . . . And since I have seen these things, I have been very conversant with spiders, resolving if possible to find out the mysteries of these their astonishing works. And I have been so happy as very frequently to see their manner of working; that when a spider would go from one tree to another, or would fly in the air, he first lets himself down a little way from the twig he stands on by a web; . . . and then laying hold of it by his fore-feet, and bearing himself by that, puts out a web . . . which is drawn out of his tail with infinite ease, in the gently moving air, to what length the spider pleases; and if the farther end happens to catch by a shrub or the branch of a tree, the spider immediately feels it, and fixes the hither end of it to the web by which he lets himself down, and goes over that web which he put out of his tail.

From this it is evident that Edwards was a most precocious youth. He became a popular preacher partly because he was always as simple in his use of words as when he was a boy eleven years of age. His knowledge was extensive. He was the foremost metaphysician in his day, anticipating the renowned Bishop Berkeley in the theories which finally became the foundation of the modern philosophy of idealism. Edwards wrote that "Those beings which have knowl-

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edge and consciousness are the only proper, and real, and substantial beings; inasmuch as the being of other things is only by these. From hence we may see the gross mistake of those who think material things the most substantial beings, and spirits more like a shadow; whereas spirits only are properly substance. . . . The material universe exists only in the mind. . . . All material existence is only idea." Neither before nor since Edwards has any one stated these ideas so simply.

The Ledyard House, Hartford, Conn.

Edwards was not only a theologian and a philosopher, but also a writer upon many problems in physics, anticipating, to some extent, the discoveries of Franklin and many later conclusions in regard to light, sound, and color. He was an original investigator in the fields of astronomy and geology and botany. His strongest power over man, however, was from the pulpit. Not only his eloquence, but his solemn sincerity, his irresistible logic, and his simple, plain words, affected audiences more lastingly than the oratory of any other man of his time.

The Pennsylvanians

33. Thomas Godfrey, Jr. — Before closing the description of the Colonial Era with a summary of the work of Benjamin Franklin, it may be well to mention the one person who during the second part of that era was worthy of the name of poet. This was Thomas Godfrey, Jr., of Philadelphia, born in that city in 1736, dying in North Carolina in 1763, the very year of the beginning of the Revolutionary Era. Godfrey wrote much verse, but the only work of note

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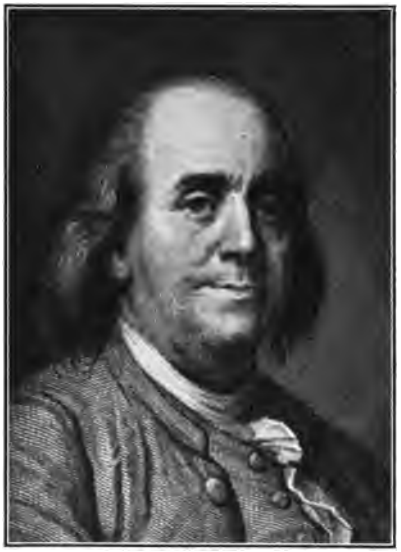
from his pen was a poetic drama, *The Prince of Parthia, a Tragedy*, published two years after his death. This was the first successful attempt at dramatic writing in America. The story of the play is oriental, told with touches of true poetry, an able and excellent beginning for work in the field of poetic drama. The play was recently revived and played in Philadelphia, and a memorial edition published, more from civic pride, however, than from belief that it is a good stage play.



Benjamin Franklin

34. Benjamin Franklin was born at Boston in 1706 and died at Philadelphia in 1790. He was the first American to gain wide repute upon the continent of Europe as a man of achievements, as a writer, and as a thinker. Many writers earlier than he had won fame in England as well as in America, but not even Jonathan Edwards, a greater thinker than Franklin, became so well and favorably known upon the European continent.

He was one of seventeen children. During his childhood and young manhood he had many occupations, candle-molder, printer's apprentice, writer of ballads, runaway, traveler, shopkeeper, — selling stationery, cheese, and feathers, and buying old rags, — editor and publisher of a newspaper, and almanac-maker. As he matured in years, he be-

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came a political economist, writing financial pamphlets and treatises, a philosophic moralist, a scientist, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a foreign diplomat, and a friend of great men both in America and Europe, himself greater than most of them. With all this immense activity, he lived a simple, unassuming life of common-sense and high integrity. Franklin was a practical man, hating shams as strongly as Carlyle in the next generation. His sound common-sense always led him to write in a clear and precise manner.

A number of essays on commerce, education, politics, religion, morals, and science were written by Franklin before 1763. In 1751, without his knowledge of its publication, a book was printed in London containing several papers which he had written upon the subject of electricity. These papers represented a knowledge and experimentation in connection with electricity superior to anything previously attained by any scientists.

35. Poor Richard's Almanac. — Franklin is more widely known through his *Almanac* than through his scientific work. He was not the maker of the first American almanac. As early as 1725 one had appeared prepared by Nathaniel Ames at Dedham, Massachusetts. This almanac continued to be issued until Ames's death in 1764; and in some respects it excelled Franklin's. Also, in 1728 James Franklin, an older brother of Benjamin, had printed the first number of an almanac which contained the same kinds of amusing comments upon life and the same sane and useful tone in its bits of advice for the conduct of life as his brother's more famous publication. Benjamin Franklin's almanac was first published in 1732, and is commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac*, because it purported to have been prepared by a Richard Saunders, said to be a physician of Philadelphia. The wise and witty sayings of "Poor Richard" in many instances by no means originated with Franklin. They were borrowed from the French writers, Rabelais, La Rochefou-

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cauld, from the English writers, Bacon, Defoe, Swift, and Steele, from the Hebrew writers of the Bible, and from many others. To all these sayings Franklin gave a new twang and a modern application, putting new beauty and a new and keener force into all the old truths which he restated. "No matter what metal you may use," says Donald G. Mitchell, "if you can put enough of your own powder behind it, 'twill reach the mark."

36. Autobiography. — Though Franklin's *Autobiography* has been praised by literary critics, — upon this book rests its author's claim to a high rank in literature, — it is doubtful whether it is so widely read to-day as many affirm. The first and best part was written in 1771; the whole work was not printed until 1791, a year after Franklin's death. For over a hundred years the book had the reputation of being the most read of any personal journal ever written. It is a faithful record of how a man, shrewd, and genial, kindly yet systematically worldly, attained success in life, — the romance of an unromantic man. McMaster, the historian, says (and George William Curtis said almost the same) that this book is "the equal of *Robinson Crusoe*, one of the few everlasting books in the English language."

Franklin was the author of many fascinating brief bits of literature. Among the most delightful of these lesser works, each of them a combination of good-sense and gaiety, are *The Ephemera*, *Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout*, and *Letters to Madame Helvetius*.

37. Franklin's Activity as a Journalist. — Franklin's name will always be associated with the history of American journalism. Printing began in this country at New Cambridge in 1639. It was, of course, under the strict censorship of the ministers and other ecclesiastical-minded Protestants who conducted the affairs of state in New England; hence this press was shut down when it dared to publish the *Imitation of Christ*, written by a medieval Catholic, Thomas à Kem-

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pis. The first newspaper in America was issued in 1690 at Boston, and was called *Public Occurrences*. It too failed to please the authorities of Massachusetts, and was soon discontinued. In 1704 came the *Boston News-Letter*, and in 1719 the *Boston Gazette*. At Philadelphia, one year later, began the career of the *American Weekly Mercury*. In 1721 James Franklin at Boston issued the first number of the *New England Courant*. Then at New York in 1725 appeared the first newspaper published in that city, the *New York Gazette*. Since that time the number and quality of American newspapers have increased until there is no greater influence. Benjamin Franklin worked upon his brother's paper, the *Courant*, and at Philadelphia in 1741 founded the first magazine in this country. The publication was called *The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for all the British Plantations in America*, — awkward enough title for even a century earlier.

We have found that the literature of America during the Colonial Era, even during the earlier years of the period, was not British literature, for, even though it was all affected by the immemorial traditions of the noble history which authorship had established in Great Britain, yet its tone and color were taken from the conditions of life in America. Though Benjamin Franklin, because of his far-seeing mind and his world-ranging interests has often been called a "citizen of the world," he yet held uppermost in his intrepid heart the interests of his native land.

BEST BOOKS UPON THE COLONIAL ERA

Cyclopedia of American Literature, Evert A. Duyckinck and George L. Duyckinck. Volume I. (Charles Scribner.)

A History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

American Lands and Letters, Donald G. Mitchell. Volume I. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

American Literature, John Nicol. (Adam and Charles Black.)

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CHAPTER II

THE ERA OF THE REVOLUTION

(1763–1800)

1. Unifying Influences at Work in the Colonies. — By 1763 the long separation of English-speaking men from the mother country had begun to bring about unforeseen changes, not only in political opinions but also in the language of the people of the colonies. The isolation of the various groups of colonies from each other, the New England, the Middle, and the Southern colonies, had wrought such variations in language as almost to justify us in applying the term *dialect* to the speech of the different sections.

Yet despite the separation of the colonies from each other, literature began about 1763 to show a greater unity than ever before, chiefly because by that time all the colonies had begun to realize thoroughly that they had some vital interests in common. This realization was helped by the newspapers, which increased in numbers and influence, spreading the same news and the same ideas over the whole seaboard. Colleges were springing up also, which, by bringing together young men for a comparatively long period of time during their most formative years, aided in making them alike in thought. In the main, the colonists were about the same in blood, and much alike in commercial interests. They were not far apart, after all, in religion; and they were becoming more and more aware that their political relations with England were much the same from Maine to Florida. Not long after 1763 it became clear to many of

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the colonists that they would soon unite in a common, conscious effort to secure their political independence of England, for it was evident that America could not hope to work out its manifest destiny, as they were conceiving that destiny, unless the colonies were free and independent.

FIRST PERIOD (1763–1789)

2. Historical Background. — The years 1763 to 1789 mark the first period of the Revolutionary era, the period during which the war was forced by England and fought and won by America. From 1789 to 1800 was also a part of the era of the Revolution, for the commonwealths did not settle down to become one real nation until about 1800, — until it had become evident that, after three terms of the presidency, the Republic was assured.

In 1763 the King of England gave notice to the colonies in America that it was time for them to share in the cost of keeping up the British Empire. The colonies made no objection to bearing a share of the cost, but insisted that the money should be raised in the English constitutional way, — that is, through the local legislatures of the colonies. In 1764 a revenue act, passed by the British Parliament, the first of a series, imposed upon the colonies taxes for imperial expense; in 1765 the Stamp Act required that revenue stamps be placed upon nearly all documents used in professional and commercial transactions. At once a Stamp Act Congress with delegates from many of the colonies met at New York and protested so vigorously that in March, 1766, the Act was repealed, though Parliament, to save its face, asserted the right to raise money in America by any method it deemed best.

In 1767 a new measure placed duties upon six articles which Americans had to buy abroad, — glass, red lead, white lead, paper, painters' colors, and tea. Representatives from the colonies met again and agreed to refrain,

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and to attempt to induce all citizens to refrain, from the use of these six articles so long as the measure remained in force. After three more years of uproar, the tax was withdrawn from all articles excepting tea, the British ministry being unwilling to give up the principle of raising money in the colonies through any means it thought best. The British government in 1775, at the suggestion of Lord North, allowed on all tea shipped from England to the colonies a rebate of such an amount as would make it possible to purchase tea at a lower price than in England. This rebate

Monuments in Honor of the Minute Men

was intended as a bribe to the colonists to submit to the principle of Parliamentary taxation. Then came the sending back to England of cargoes of tea, the storing of other cargoes in damp cellars where the tea would surely spoil, the burning of some, and the casting into the sea of others. The boldest deed was the so-called Boston Tea-party, which resulted in the British government's closing the port of Boston to all shipping and sending troops across the sea to keep the Massachusetts colony in order.

The political leaders of the thirteen colonies felt that this fate might befall every port, and other tyrannical acts fol-

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low; hence committees of correspondence between the colonies were formed, the Continental Congress met, military stores were accumulated, armed men gathered, and finally in Boston occurred the "Boston Massacre." Then followed eight years of war, — the American Revolutionary War.

The war should not be thought of as the whole revolution. It was only the military part of the revolution. The truer revolution was the change in men's opinions and in the form of government. The change of opinions came before the war; it had begun even before 1763. The change in government worked itself out gradually during the war and for a few years afterward, the government not being settled enough for the first president, Washington, to be inaugurated until six years after the war was over. And this revolution was not merely an American revolution, for it also brought about vast and permanent changes in the entire British Empire. The speeches of the greatest of all orators, Edmund Burke, and those of the greatest of all English statesmen, Pitt, the Earl of Chatham, showed the strongest sympathy of the foremost people of England with the attitude of the colonies toward representative government. Even many English humorists gave their wholehearted sympathy to the colonies. One illustration from a London newspaper of 1775 will suffice:

> Rudely forced to drink tea, Massachusetts in anger
> Spills the tea on John Bull — John falls on to bang her;
> Massachusetts, enraged, calls her neighbors to aid,
> And gives John a severe bastinade!
> Now, good men of the law, pray who is at fault, —
> The one who begins, or resists the assault?

The American Revolution was, then, both political and military. The political aspect of the revolution produced, as we should expect, practically all of the literature of the time. The movement was a struggle of wits before it became a struggle with arms, American statesmen and pam-

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phleteers attempting to prove to Great Britain the un-English nature of the empire's control of the colonies, and to arouse Americans to active protest and even resistance against misgovernment from abroad. The political aspect of the revolution continued after the struggle at arms had ceased, and was fruitful of literature.

Independence Hall

The whole situation may be presented in this way: the clash of opinions began seriously in 1763, the clash of arms in 1775, the Declaration of Independence was drawn up in 1776, the war continued until 1783, the Constitutional Convention met in 1787, and Washington was inaugurated in 1789, his administration continuing through two terms and proving the stability of the new representative government. These are the main points in the history of the Revolutionary era, and the main events affecting literature.

3. Insignificant Literary Output. — There was very little literature of lasting worth produced in America during the sixteen years from 1763 to 1789, excepting that associated with the political aspect of the revolutionary movement. This is as true of poetry as of prose. Only two men attract attention as having written anything besides political literature of permanent appeal, John Woolman and Philip Freneau; and Freneau wrote much that was political. Wool-

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man was a writer of charming prose, Freneau first of all a poet. The other leading prose writers from 1763 to 1789 were Jonathan Mayhew, James Otis, J. Hector St. John de Crevecœur, John Dickinson, John Adams, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton. Besides Freneau there were other poets, Francis Hopkinson, John Trumbull, Timothy Dwight, Phillis Wheatley, and Joel Barlow, all more or less political in their verse-making.

Writers of Prose

4. The Journal of John Woolman. — While the autobiography of John Woolman, printed under the title of *The Journal of John Woolman*, is less known than Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography, yet the style of Woolman is superior to that of Franklin. Charles Lamb was so fascinated by the purity and beauty of Woolman's *Journal* that he exclaimed, "Get the writings of John Woolman by heart!" Woolman was a farmer lad, a clerk in a general merchandise store, and then a tailor by trade. His journal extends over the last sixteen years of his life, and describes his labors as a preaching apostle of the Quaker sect, or "Society of Friends." During this preaching period he made his living by handwork as a tailor, as the Apostle Paul by the making of tents. Perhaps one sentence from the *Journal* will show both the quiet quality of his style and the leading motive of the organization to which he belonged: "We were taught by renewed experience to labor for an inward stillness; at no time to seek for words, but to live in the spirit of truth, and utter that to the people which truth opened to us."

5. Jonathan Mayhew. — Out on the island of Martha's Vineyard there was born in 1720 a boy who was destined, before he died at the age of forty-six, to become the foremost patriot preacher of the Revolution. He did not become quite the transcendent genius which the enthusiastic patriot John Adams thought him to be, but he almost mer-

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ited, in his smaller sphere, to be described as "a later Luther and a soldier-priest." This patriot preacher was named Jonathan Mayhew, a man of lofty and forceful character. His sermons and other public addresses were influenced by the political writings of John Milton, and, though they lacked the brilliancy of the master, they were no less vehement in their denunciation of the lack of freedom in a nation which will permit itself to be ruled by any other than the wisest and best men. That for which Mayhew should be most remembered is the letter written by him to James Otis, also a revolutionary leader, containing a project for "a good understanding and hearty friendship" between the colonies, and urging that as there was already "communion of churches" so there should be "great use and importance of a communion of colonies."

Faneuil Hall

6. James Otis. — According to John Adams, "American independence was then and there born" when, in the council chamber of the Old Town House in Boston, a Boston lawyer, James Otis, delivered a speech against the "writs of assistance," papers granting to customs officers of the British crown the power to compel Massachusetts citizens to help in the search of the houses

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of their fellow citizens. This was in 1761. Whether or not the speech by Otis did "breathe into this nation the breath of life," as Adams said, a pamphlet by Otis in 1764 upon *The Rights of the British Colonies* "satisfied nobody, yet gave food for thought to everybody." It did just this because it was both a plea to the British government to avert war with the colonies and a presentation of all the reasons why a separation under the conditions then existing was inevitable.

7. John Dickinson. — The real "Penman of the American Revolution," according to his contemporaries, was John Dickinson of Philadelphia, a lawyer by profession though one who was more interested in history and politics than in the practice of the law. Dickinson was the author of scores of the most momentous state papers of these years, the chief of which, in clear and stately style, was the *Articles of Confederation*, the instrument of government under which the united commonwealths were ruled until the present Constitution went into effect on March 4, 1789. Paul Leicester Ford has said that Dickinson was as preëminent in the literature of the Revolution "as Washington in war, Franklin in diplomacy, and Morris in finance." Aside from the *Articles of Confederation*, his claim to permanent fame is a series of essays called *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania.* These "letters" gained instant recognition both at home and abroad for the brilliancy, seriousness, and power with which they argued against the new oppressive measures of taxation, method of collecting taxes, and quartering of troops, which the British Parliament was putting into effect in 1767. They were notable also for their luminously sane desire for peace and unity within the empire of the English race. Dickinson should be better known to-day.

8. Letters from an American Farmer. — Another group of essays in letter form created a stir in the literary world of the revolutionary days. These were written by J. Hector

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St. John de Crevecœur. Crevecœur was born in Normandy, France, in 1731. Sixteen years later he removed to Salisbury, England. At the age of twenty-three he came to America and settled down to the business of farming near Carlisle in the colony of Pennsylvania, three hundred miles, as he said, from the sea. Later he lived in Orange County, New York. In 1782 a book containing twelve essays in letter form was published in London, calling itself *Letters from an American Farmer* and claiming to have been written by J. Hector St. John. The author was Crevecœur, who probably did not give his full name because at that time a work by a Franco-American would not have been likely to be acceptable to Londoners. The graceful style, the idealization of country life in America, and the force with which the author handled the problem of slavery, the struggles with Indians, and the division of the colonists into revolutionists and loyalists, led to the immediate translation of the *Letters* into French, Dutch, and German, a proof of widespread interest in the book. Later Crevecœur's pictures seem to have influenced Coleridge and Southey in their Utopian scheme for colonization upon the banks of the Susquehanna. It was rather such passages as the following which made his *Letters* most popular in that day when nature sentiment abounded in Europe:

The pleasure I receive from the warblings of the birds in the spring is superior to my poor description, as the continual succession of their tuneful notes is ever new to me. I generally rise from bed about that indistinct interval which, properly speaking, is neither night nor day; for this is the moment of the most universal vocal choir. Who can listen unmoved to the sweet love-tales of our robins, told from tree to tree, or to the shrill cat-birds? The sublime accents of the thrush, from on high, always retard my steps, that I may listen to the delicious music. The variegated appearances of the dewdrops, as they hang to the different objects, must present, even to a clownish imagination, the most voluptuous ideas. The astonishing art which all birds display in the con-

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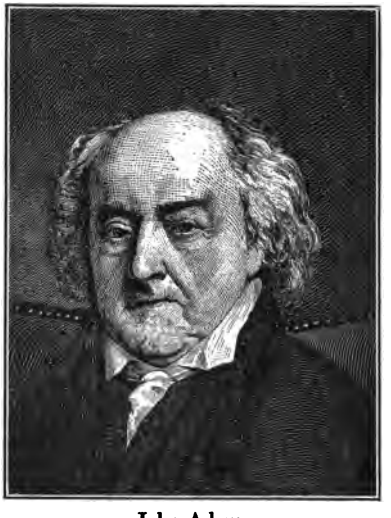
struction of their nests, ill-provided as we may suppose them with proper tools, their neatness, their convenience, always make me ashamed of the slovenliness of our houses. Their love to their dame, their incessant careful attention, and the peculiar songs they address to her while she tediously incubates their eggs, remind me of my duty, could I ever forget it. Their affection to their helpless little ones is a lovely precept; and, in short, the whole economy of what we call the brute creation, is admirable in every circumstance; and vain man, though adorned with the additional gift of reason, might learn from the perfection of instinct how to regulate the follies, and how to temper the errors, which this second gift makes him commit.

9. John Adams. — The gentleman who in 1801 drove away from the White House in great wrath, indignation, and, no doubt, jealousy, because of having to give up the presidency to Thomas Jefferson, was John Adams. This emotional, heated state of mind had been characteristic of Adams when, during the revolutionary days, he was writing his trenchant and interesting essays, diary, and letters. His "Diary" is especially attractive reading for the student of American history, and the letters included in his *Works* are full of incisive, fearless, though often prejudiced comment upon the men and events of his time. Some have thought the letters of Adams in that time are surpassed only by those of Franklin. They were actual letters to friends and others, not literary essays



John Adams

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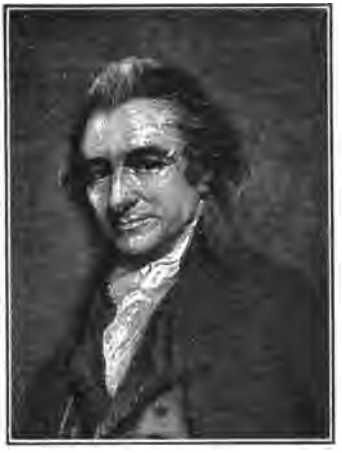
in the form of letters, as were those of Dickinson and Crevecœur.

10. Thomas Paine. — Among the men whom Benjamin Franklin started upon careers of distinction, was the English-born, liberty-loving Thomas Paine, who came to America in 1774. Paine was first a tailor, then a surveyor, next an editor, and finally achieved lasting renown by the publication of three works. These were *Common Sense*, *The Crisis*, and the *Rights of Man*, the last not printed, however, until the later years of the period of the Revolution. The pamphlet called *Common Sense* was published in January, 1776, and more than any other one thing accounts for the change in the opinion of the majority of the patriots concerning a lasting union with Britain. Even when Congress in July, 1775, had made Washington head of the American army it had declared that it had no intention of separation from the mother country. But after the printing of *Common Sense* great numbers of people who had been opposed to separation or who had been hesitant about it radically changed their minds. This pamphlet abounded in striking sayings: "The palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise," "Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived," "The period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest."



Thomas Paine

In December of 1775 Paine began a periodical, *The*

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Crisis, and continued it intermittently until 1783. It contained a series of political essays. The first one began with the electrical battle-cry, "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

While Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and *Crisis* were written during the military years of the Revolution, his two remaining works appeared during the later constructive years, the *Rights of Man* in 1791–92, and the *Age of Reason* in 1794. The *Rights of Man* was written during a sojourn in England. It answered Edmund Burke's attacks upon the French Revolution. For its publication Paine was outlawed from England. He crossed the channel to France, and there wrote the *Age of Reason*, a pamphlet which came to be much hated in England and in America, because it seemed to be highly atheistic. The little book is of small importance to us, excepting historically. It is difficult at this distance from the theological notions of that day to see how it was possible to condemn as an unbeliever's document a bit of writing which contained such a passage as this:

> It is only in the Creation that all our ideas and conceptions of a word of God can unite. . . . Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful.

Paine was first of all a journalist, interested in arousing immediate attention, and in making the most of current

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events. He subjected the live issues of his day to the test of common sense, inspiring and steadying the minds of men for the great tasks at hand.

11. The Declaration of Independence. — Few, if any, of the writers of this period are to-day more readable than Thomas Jefferson. Both he and Paine wrote as *good* journalists write to-day, shrewdly, alertly, pointedly, and, at times, with incisive humor. It is his connection with the drafting of the *Declaration of Independence* which has given Jefferson undying fame as an author. Jefferson was not a strikingly original writer; but when he was made chairman of the committee for drawing up a declaration, he brought to the task his gift of enkindling style and his journalistic sensitiveness to what was going on about him. Hence, as Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College, said in 1783, into the *Declaration of Independence* Jefferson "poured the soul of the continent." Undoubtedly in the realm of political writing this paper is the one best known of all "that ever came from the pen of an individual."

Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson was versatile, — almost to an extreme, for if he had not turned his attention to so many varied things he might have done a few things better. It is the custom to dwell upon the great number of things Franklin was and

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could do, but it is often overlooked that Jefferson was mathematician, astronomer, sailor, architect, designer of landscapes, lawyer, politician, statesman, and even linguist. His ability to use many languages is best shown in a rather curious volume, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth.* This book is striking evidence not only of his linguistic ability but of the fact that even if he was greatly influenced by the thinking of the leaders of the French Revolution, which

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Home of Thomas Jefferson

in many instances was decidedly atheistic, Jefferson was by no means the atheist he is so often popularly supposed to have been.

12. The Constitution. — After the war, the States found difficulty in adjusting themselves to each other. Each found difficulty in governing itself. The Articles of Confederation held them together loosely. Jealousies among the political and commercial leaders of each State made harmony at home almost an impossibility. Anarchy, a state of

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no government at all, approximated the actual state of political affairs. There were a few leaders, however, among whom were Washington, Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay, who proved themselves far-seeing and cool-headed statesmen. They set themselves earnestly to the task of making chaos into order. The results of their efforts, and of those associated with them, were revealed in the adoption of the Federal Constitution, at Philadelphia, in 1787, and the beginning of government in 1789, with Washington as the chief executive.

Alexander Hamilton

13. Federalist Papers.— The willingness of the States to form a union under the Constitution as the organizing law of the land, was due chiefly to the arguments presented for such a union and for the excellent qualities of the Constitution in the *Federalist Papers*. There were eighty-five of these articles, three-fourths of them written by Alexander Hamilton, the remainder by James Madison and John Jay. These papers were not read by the populace so extensively as by its leaders. They were not written in popular style, such as had caused the spirited pamphlets by Tom Paine to be read by everybody. But the influence of the *Federalist Papers* was so strong upon the leaders of the people that the majority of the citizens were convinced that the proposed form of government was not to be merely another experiment. The papers were original in thought, broad and liberal in view, straightforward and simple in

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style. For the close reasoning and the real erudition displayed in these papers Hamilton was chiefly responsible. After Jonathan Edwards, Hamilton has been thus far the most purely and powerfully intellectual of all Americans; the man of whom Talleyrand, the famous minister of Napoleon, said that he had never known his equal.

Writers of Verse; Wits and Patriots

The verse-writers of this first part of the Revolutionary Era were Francis Hopkinson, John Trumbull, Phillis Wheatley, Philip Freneau, and Joel Barlow. Trumbull and Barlow were the best of a small group of verse-makers, not to say poets, who, because they lived at Hartford, Connecticut, and because of the cleverness and pungency of their phrases, were known as the Hartford Wits.

14. John Trumbull. — One of John Trumbull's famous works was a satire called *The Progress of Dulness*, no doubt in imitation of Alexander Pope's *Dunciad*. The poem set forth the effect of the college training of the day upon three people already foolish enough, — Tom Brainless, Dick Hairbrain, and Harriet Simper. Trumbull's best known work, however, was the mock epic, *M'Fingal*. The plan of this epic and the verse were patterned after those of the English satire *Hudibras*, by Samuel Butler. The author of *M'Fingal* said that he was attempting, with as much impartiality as possible, to satirize the follies and extravagances both of his countrymen and of their enemies. However, the poem was much more severe upon *M'Fingal*, the royalist squire, than upon any American patriot. So good are the couplets now and then among these verses that they are sometimes quoted as if from Butler, and not from Trumbull. An illustration is

> No man e'er felt the halter draw,
> With good opinion of the law.

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Next to Freneau, Trumbull comes nearest of the writers of the time to being a really good poet.

15. Joel Barlow. — To some readers it may seem strange that Joel Barlow should be considered among the verse-writers of this period, because they have heard that his *Columbiad*, the most ambitious of all attempts to write the epic of early America, was not published until 1807. But any one who has ever read a hundred lines of that "epic" knows that it is a most stupid piece of work; and a much more praiseworthy poem by Barlow is *The Vision of Columbus*, published during the period we are now considering, in the year 1787. Unfortunately, the author later enlarged *The Vision of Columbus*, and made it over into the unreadable *Columbiad*. Good as some of Barlow's verses are, he made a better ambassador to France than American poet.

16. Phillis Wheatley. — A precocious negro child was brought in 1761 from Africa to Boston and there sold to a Mrs. Wheatley. This child became known as Phillis Wheatley, and, with the exception of Paul Laurence Dunbar, is still the best poet of negro blood America has produced. That the following letter was written to Phillis Wheatley is evidence of the respect in which she was once held:

> If you should ever come to Cambridge, or near headquarters, I shall be happy to see a person so favored by the Muses, and to whom Nature has been so liberal and beneficent in her dispensations: I am, with great respect, your obedient humble servt,
>
> GEO. WASHINGTON.

Miss Wheatley was an imitator of the English poets of the eighteenth century, writing apt thoughts in smooth lines, and paraphrasing the classic writers of still older days. The couplets quoted below illustrate the grace and picturesqueness and strength with which she could paraphrase the Latin poet Ovid:

> With clouds encompassed, glorious Phœbus stands,
> With feathered vengeance quivering in his hands.

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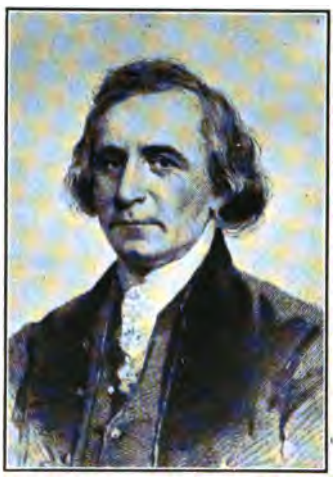
Then didst thou Sipylus the language hear
Of fate portentous whistling in the air.

17. Francis Hopkinson was a versatile man, by profession a lawyer, but doing research work in chemistry and physics, keeping a store, studying literature both widely and intensively, and engaging in many other activities. Most of his poetry was humorous. The best known of his verses are those in the poem entitled *The Battle of the Kegs*, written in 1778, describing a panic said to have been created among British soldiers and sailors by mysterious kegs, like the wooden horse at the siege of Troy, thought to contain armed soldiers, which were thrown into the Delaware River at Philadelphia. Hopkinson was a vivacious and gifted political essayist in prose as well as a successful humorist in verse. Possibly, though, he may be best known in the future, not for his writings, but for his having been the father of Joseph Hopkinson, the author of *Hail Columbia*.



Philip Freneau

18. Philip Freneau was born at New York in 1752. He received his education at the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, became a Revolutionary soldier, a ship commander, a journalist, and a politician. From early manhood until his death in 1832, Freneau was a conspicuous figure in the life of the nation. As a poet he wrote a large quantity of flowing verse, most of which did not surpass the quality of verse that gets no farther than the columns of the country newspaper. Yet with all the quantity

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and "superfluency" of his verse, he succeeded in making many people, not happy as the poet usually does, but uncomfortable; especially uncomfortable did he make the politicians, first of the Republican party, and then of the Federalist, for Freneau in his political affiliations was an independent, if not a turncoat. Under the lash of his lines the New England Puritans came in for their due share of discomfort, as, for example,

> There exiles were formed in a whimsical mould,
> And were awed by their priests, like the Hebrews of old,
> Disclaimed all pretences to jesting and laughter,
> And sighed their lives through to be happy thereafter.

Freneau's best poems had nothing to do with civic or religious matters. They are *The Wild Honeysuckle*, *The Indian Burying-ground*, and *To a Honey Bee*, the last of which Edmund Clarence Stedman says "is good enough to be Landor's." American poets owe many of their ideas and a great deal of the emotional coloring of these ideas to the writers of the old world, but old world writers have not scrupled to adopt and adapt from Americans. At least one line from the second of these poems was used by a Scottish poet, Thomas Campbell, with no change except in punctuation; and even Sir Walter Scott took another line from the same poem.

SECOND PERIOD (1789–1800)

19. The Historical Background. — In 1789 George Washington became President of the United States, under the new Constitution. The transcendent personal qualities of this most judicious of all great men in history made the working of the new government an eminent success. That the country could fall back into the hands of a European power or come under the control of a local military despotism was forever rendered impossible by the exercise of Washington's calm and far-seeing wisdom. The work of Hamp-

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den and Cromwell for English liberties was extended on these shores, and the "more perfect union" called for by the Constitution was firmly established. So far as literature is concerned, the men of talent and genius during those days of laying the foundations of this nation's greatness were too

Washington Mansion, Mount Vernon

busy at their chosen task for the production of "belles-lettres." Hence from 1789 to 1800 there was little writing of lasting worth except that which was political.

Prose

20. Washington's Farewell Address. — Washington's "State Papers" were a contribution to the political literature of the United States. His *Farewell Address* to the American people in 1799 has been a storehouse of wisdom and of practical guidance during every time of trial and stress since that day. But the legacy of Washington to posterity was, after all, not so much the eleven volumes of public and pri-

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vate papers, collected by the historian, Jared Sparks, and published in 1837, as it was a new conception of character in public men. Says George Bancroft, "They say of Giotto that he introduced goodness into the art of painting; Washington carried it with him to the camp and the cabinet, and established a new criterion of human greatness."

Verse

21. Timothy Dwight. — If we are seeking for verse with individual character and anything resembling unique genius, only one poet not already mentioned as writing during the Revolutionary era is worthy of notice. That was Timothy Dwight, who became a most distinguished President of Yale College. Of his works the *Conquest of Canaan*, a didactic epic which in its application would fit any time and place, is most frequently mentioned. However, we must frankly recognize that the poem is monotonous and extravagant in sentiment. Certainly nobody reads it. One poem of Dwight's, however, *Greenfield Hill* (1794), may still be read with pleasure and profit, for it is exceptional in its beauty and its wisdom. It is an idyllic description of life and manners in a small Connecticut town. The author was not a great poet, but he displays the fine physical and mental vision necessary for a truly realistic understanding of human life.

BEST BOOKS UPON THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA

The Prose Writers of America, Rufus Wilmot Griswold. (Porter and Coates.)

American Literature, Charles F. Richardson. Volume I. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

The Literary History of the American Revolution, Moses Coit Tyler. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

American Verse, William Bradley Otis. (Moffat, Yard, and Company.)

A Manual of American Literature, Theodore Stanton. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

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CHAPTER III

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

(1800–1837)

1. General Survey. — The literature of the period covering the Early Nineteenth Century began in an important way with the publication of a novel in 1801 by Charles Brockden Brown. It ended in 1837, and the period of the Mid-century began, with Emerson's speech upon *The American Scholar*. This Early Nineteenth Century period we divide into two parts, the first ending in 1815, the second extending from that date until the giving of Emerson's noble address. The first part of this period was barren of great poetry, perhaps only one poem of lasting merit, *The Star-spangled Banner*, enlivening its desert waste. Before the close of our second war with the mother country and the beginning of the so-called Era of Good Feeling in our politics, even prose literature was only groping its way. In fact, these years mark but the beginning of that American literature the purpose of which was to entertain. It was at least a beginning, for previous to 1800 almost all the writing gave information about the topography of the country, or presented arguments, religious or political. Much of the descriptive and controversial literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was characterized by vigor and vision; but these qualities were practically absent from fiction until the time of Charles Brockden Brown and Washington Irving. The familiar essay also had its beginnings during these fifteen years, in the work of Irving and of James K. Paulding. During the years 1815 to 1837 Irving

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continued his work and James Fenimore Cooper wrote *The Spy* and some of the Leather-Stocking Tales. Bryant, Poe, Emerson, and Holmes began their work in verse, and at least half a dozen other prose authors and a few less of writers of verse achieved fame.

FIRST PERIOD (1800–1815)

Writers of Prose

2. Charles Brockden Brown. — Three prose writers rose to distinction within these earliest nineteenth-century years, Charles Brockden Brown, James Kirke Paulding, and Washington Irving, though Irving's work did not come to maturity until after 1815. Brown stands out as the first man of letters in America to devote himself exclusively to the profession of authorship, and as the first American novelist of note. Like Hawthorne at a later date, he was precocious as a schoolboy and somewhat moodily loved to be left alone. Like many another famous American man of letters, he began his more serious days of schooling as a student of the law, which he soon abandoned for literature.

Charles Brockden Brown

During the years of Brown's authorship, 1797 to 1810, the novel writers most popular in Europe were the Englishmen, Beckford, Walpole, and Godwin, famous for their skill in handling abnormal, fantastic, and even horrible themes,— themes such as became popular with the American public and with American authors, particularly after the days of

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Poe. In English literature these authors, together with Mrs. Radcliffe and Mrs. Shelley, and a few others, came to be known as of The School of Terror. Brown introduced the novel of terror into the United States. Shelley was enthusiastic over Brown's novels, and they won the commendation of the great wizard, Sir Walter Scott.

3. Charles Brockden Brown's Novels. — The most successful of Brown's novels were *Wieland*, *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn*, and *Edgar Huntley*. *Wieland* is a tale of adventure, with an evil-minded ventriloquist playing a large part in the action. In the record of a death by "spontaneous combustion," the story anticipates an incident in Dickens' *Bleak House*. *Ormond* contains in the person of Constantia Dudley its author's one fine characterization of a woman. *Arthur Mervyn* is praiseworthy for its thrillingly accurate relation of incidents during the plague of yellow fever which ravaged New York and Philadelphia, and of which the author was an observer and sufferer. In this book the author shows himself to be as passionately anxious to tell the whole horrible truth, as was Daniel Defoe in his *Journal of the Plague Year*. *Edgar Huntley* bases its story upon a case of mistaken identity. A poor foreigner afflicted with sleep-walking is seen by Edgar upon a moonlight night to be burying something beneath a tree. At once he is supposed to be the murderer of Edgar's sister's friend, Waldegrave. Edgar pursues the somnambulist for many years, through wildest American scenery and amid most appalling Indian atrocities. Through it all Brown anticipates the scenic descriptions and the native character-sketching of Cooper, but he shows no such sanity of mind nor any such wholesomeness of attitude as does the author of *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Brown is little read to-day; but it is not because his novels lack vigorously imaginative relation of adventures, nor because they are unoriginal in character portrayal. Rather it is because the writers of our day have profited by a study

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of the skilled achievements in the novel of adventure which was written in such great numbers during the century that has elapsed since Brown's day. They have learned to "turn the trick" in more logical and climactic fashion than Brown was able to display.

4. James K. Paulding, a close friend of Washington Irving, and a brother-in-law of Irving's older brother, William, was primarily responsible for the publication of a series of papers written after the manner of the essays of Addison and Steele and Goldsmith. These were called *Salmagundi Papers.* In this literary enterprise, Paulding had the able assistance of both William and Washington Irving. These essays set themselves to satirize lightly the society in the New York of the early nineteenth century. They reveal minute and shrewd observation and a well-balanced view of what society is and of what it ought to be. A later satire by Paulding, entitled *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan,* is still widely read. It was a gently humorous and urbane criticism of the squabble between England and her American children over "thirteen good farms."

James K. Paulding

Paulding wrote two worthy novels, *The Dutchman's Fireside* and *Westward Ho!* (not to be confused with Charles Kingsley's novel of the same name), in 1831 and 1832, during the second half of the early nineteenth-century period.

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The first pictured with some charm the domestic life of the Dutch colonial days; the second, the struggle of the colonies with the aborigines.

Paulding was careless in his style, wrote hastily, without premeditation, and with little care for revising his work. Hence, as is always the case with ill-written work, the number of its readers has decreased until now Paulding is best known for his association with Irving and two others of the so-called Knickerbocker School, the poets Joseph Rodman Drake and Fitz-Greene Halleck.

Washington Irving (1783–1859)

5. Washington Irving is commonly known as the Father of American Literature. Almost immediately upon the publication of his earliest work, he attained international recognition. Irving was an imitator of British writers. Much of his work, the *Sketch-Book* for example, is English in subject matter, and most of it English in tone.

Washington Irving

Washington Irving was born in New York City April 3, 1783. As a youth, he showed a longing for travel, a capacity for keen and close observation, and a tendency to day-dreaming. He developed early a fondness for the things that refine, — music, the drama, books of travel, painting. At school, in return for their working

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his arithmetic problems, he would write compositions for his fellow pupils. His formal school life ended when he was fifteen years of age; the next year he entered an office for the purpose of preparing for a legal career. Ill health sent him to Europe in 1804. In 1806 he returned to America, and passed his legal examination, though his chief aspiration while abroad had been to become a painter. Then came the *Salmagundi Papers*, and, in 1809, the *Knickerbocker History of New York*. Politics, magazine writing, and the hardware and cutlery business with his brothers, occupied his attention until 1815, when he went a second time to Europe, to remain seventeen years. Again in 1842 he returned to Europe, this time as United States minister to Spain.

6. Irving's *Knickerbocker History*. — "A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty, by Diedrich Knickerbocker," is the reading upon the title page of this notable book. Irving's brother Peter assisted in writing the first part, which began as a parody of a popular history of New York, written by a Samuel L. Mitchill, entitled *Picture of New York*. Historians of an earlier day had been inclined to think it philosophical to begin their accounts of any nation or period of history by tracing briefly the history of mankind back to its beginnings. This fashion the Irvings had in mind particularly to ridicule; but the book grew into something more worthy under Washington Irving's own hand, his brother Peter abandoning his share because of work in the cutlery business in the firm of Irving Brothers. The effect of the burlesque was all the stronger because Irving dedicated it to the Historical Society. Many Dutch families in New York resented the ridicule of their ancestors. If Irving's fun seems somewhat boisterous to our taste, we must remember that during the early days of the last century, the English and their descendants were wont to jest freely at the expense of their Dutch neighbors. The New Yorkers, or

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Gothamites as Irving called them (a name derived from England and not from Holland, a fact which should have mitigated the anger of the Dutch), were not alone the objects of farcical humor, for the second division, or "book," of the "History" is devoted chiefly to capital fooling with the settlers of New Jersey. And New England comes in for its share of grave and gay treatment. Perhaps the last three "books" of the work are the most interesting to the reader of to-day.

7. Irving's Works. — After the *Knickerbocker History*, Irving's chief works fall into three groups:

Sketches and Tales	*Histories*
The Sketch-Book	The Conquest of Granada
Bracebridge Hall	Voyages of the Companions of Columbus
Tales of a Traveler	
Wolfert's Roost	
The Alhambra	

Biographies

Life of Columbus
Oliver Goldsmith
Mahomet and his Successors
Life of George Washington

8. *Sketch-book.* — In June, 1819, Irving began the *Sketch-Book*, assuming the pen-name of Geoffrey Crayon, and giving literary permanency to many things, not the least of which were his memories of the Catskills and the Hudson. This book contains the immortal "Legend of Sleepy Hollow," "The Spectre Bridegroom," and "Rip Van Winkle," made immortal not so much by the content of the stories as by their "mellow, flowing, and softly-tinted" style. In 1822 appeared *Bracebridge Hall*, a continuation of that part of the *Sketch-Book* which had been concerned with the life of Merry England. This is a highly finished work, though some of its material is of slight importance.

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9. ***Tales of a Traveler; The Alhambra.*** — In *Tales of a Traveler* (1824), Irving continued his felicitous writing, and attempted, as he thought, to produce his best work in fiction. These tales have not the reputation of the earlier stories, though Sir Walter Scott gave them high praise. Two of them, "The Bold Dragoon" and "Wolfert Webber," merit praise. Irving later collected from the *Knickerbocker Magazine* a number of miscellaneous papers, sketches, and tales which he entitled *Wolfert's Roost*. *The Alhambra*, however, preceded *Wolfert's Roost* by many years, coming from the press in 1832. It consists of descriptive sketches, rambling tales, and short-stories, not the equal of the best three in the *Sketch-Book*, yet among the finest of American interpretations of old-world romantic history. The historian, Prescott, called Irving's *Alhambra* "the beautiful Spanish Sketch Book." Irving was thoroughly prepared to write the legends of the Alhambra, an ancient Moorish palace and fortress of Granada, for he had lived within its courts and had there made exhaustive studies of Spanish history and romance. Of his residence in the Alhambra he wrote to a friend:

Hudson River, at West Point

Here then I am, nestled in one of the most remarkable, romantic, and delicious spots in the world. I have the complete range, and I may say control, of the palace, for the only residents besides myself are a worthy old woman, her niece and nephew who have charge of the building, and who make my bed, cook my meals, and

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are all kindness and attention to me. I breakfast in the salon of the ambassadors, or among the flowers and fountains in the Court of the Lions, and, when I am not occupied with the pen, I lounge with my book about these Oriental apartments, or stroll about the courts and arcades, by day or night, with no one to interrupt me. It absolutely appears to me like a dream, or as if I am spellbound in some fairy palace.

10. ***The Conquest of Granada*** was also the outcome of Irving's close study of Spanish chronicles, and is in the main a description of the many romantic struggles between the Moors and the Spaniards. Yet the author could not, even while scanning the records of old Goths, Arab-Moors, and Spaniards, forget that he was an American. "How full of interest," he wrote, "everything is, connected with the old times in Spain! I am more and more delighted with the old literature of the country, its chronicles, plays, and romances. It has the wild vigor and luxuriance of the forests of my native country, which, however savage and entangled, are more captivating to my imagination than the finest parks and cultivated woodlands."

11. ***The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*** was published in 1828, and the *Voyages of the Companions of Columbus* (1833) was practically supplement to it. Both in its historical method and in its selection of interesting details the former is an admirable book. Even though it has been criticized for minor inaccuracies, no life of the great explorer has yet superseded it in either popular favor or scientific historic worth. While Irving understood thoroughly that the historian and biographer must tell the truth, he also had the literary instinct for selecting those truths which have human interest and human value.

12. Irving's Other Biographies. — Irving's other important biographies may be mentioned here, for he had partly prepared for them during this period. The *Life of Oliver Goldsmith* was not published until 1849, after Irving had

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served as United States minister to Spain; *Mahomet and his Successors*, in 1850; and the *Life of George Washington*, during the years from 1855 to 1859. Perhaps no other biography exists in which there is more of really intelligent sympathy of author for subject than Irving's *Life of Goldsmith*. Here we are led to see the real man Goldsmith, not the less so even when the author obtrudes his own personality, because Irving and Goldsmith in temperament were much alike. Of this book Irving wrote, "It is a tribute of gratitude to the memory of an author whose writings were the delight of my childhood, and have been a source of enjoyment to me throughout life, and to whom of all others I address the beautiful apostrophe of Virgil, —

Sunnyside, Residence of Washington Irving

> Thou art my master, and my teacher thou;
> It was from thee, and thee alone, I took
> That noble style for which men honor me.

Irving had thought that his two-volume life of *Mahomet* would be one of his greatest works. As frequently happens with an author, his judgment of his own work was at fault. The book is interesting for its style and for its romantic incidents, but does not probe deeply and thoughtfully into the character of Mahomet or into the significance of his career. Still the book is eminently readable, and no biography of the leader of Islam has fewer faults.

For at least thirty years Irving had in mind a *Life of Washington*. Often during those years his pen was at work

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upon this task. When the five volumes finally came from the press, they won instant recognition. They still bid fair to be the one enduring presentation of the character of our first president. A reason for the high quality of the book is that, in serenity, in calm poise, and in a justly balanced optimism in his outlook upon life, Irving was kindred to the Father of the American Republic. The *Life of Washington* is a history of the revolutionary period as well as a biography of its leader. And if works written since it was composed have supplemented in essential matters of fact the life by Irving, none has superseded it as an interpretation.

Irving's best writing in his later years was historical, consisting of the lives of Goldsmith, Mahomet, and Washington, which we have just mentioned. Other late works, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville* (1837) and *Wolfert's Roost* (1855), both of them fiction, are the least read of his many volumes. In them he was still attempting to carry out his philosophy, — "I have always had an opinion that much good might be done by keeping mankind in good humor with one another." These works of fiction served to strengthen further the purpose of Irving to lead the world to believe that the air of romance was not more absent from American scenes than from those of the Old World. Though Irving invented the phrase "the almighty dollar," yet he unswervingly insisted that America was not given entirely to the worship of wealth.

In delicacy of feeling, in sensitiveness of perception, in wholesomeness of attitude, in pure geniality of humor, Irving is still the greatest of American *writers*. Our study of Irving can close most appropriately with Lowell's characterization in his *Fable for Critics*, —

> What! Irving! Thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain·
> You bring back the happiest of spirit from Spain,
> And the gravest sweet humor that ever were there
> Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;

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Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
And having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel, —
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, minus the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's stock and good-will,
Mix well, and, while stirring, hum o'er as a spell,
The "fine old English Gentleman," simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm, lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature not wholly deserving
A name neither English nor Yankee — just Irving.

Writers of Verse

13. The National Hymn. — For poetry of great merit, one searches in vain in the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century. Poets who had already achieved fame, such as Philip Freneau, were still living, but they were occupied with other things than verse-writing. And poets yet to achieve fame were also living, but too youthful or also too busied with other interests to write "very valuable verse." Only one great poem belongs to these years, *The Star-spangled Banner*. It was written in 1814 by a Maryland lawyer, Francis Scott Key, a prisoner aboard a British ship, the morning after he had witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry. The

Francis Scott Key

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poem won immediate acceptance and high favor the country over. Its diction has been criticized adversely; the third stanza has been thought to perpetuate the memory of an outworn feeling of hostility against Great Britain; and the music of the piece is rather difficult for a popular audience. Yet, despite these drawbacks, *The Star-spangled Banner* increases rather than diminishes in popularity.

SECOND PERIOD (1815–1837)

The years 1815 to 1837 saw the early course of our literature well advanced, with such authors as Irving, Cooper, Longfellow, Bryant, Poe, Emerson, and Holmes beginning their work. Irving's first successes had even antedated these years. Of the other six just mentioned only Cooper will be considered in this chapter, for Longfellow, Bryant, Poe, Emerson, and Holmes, though rising high in the firmament of letters before 1837, yet reached the zenith of their careers during the mid-century period. Besides Cooper, many writers of fiction now little known basked in the light of popular favor; and a few writers of verse, each now remembered for no more than one or two poems, appealed widely to the public of their day. It is not likely that any of these minor writers of verse and prose will soon be wholly forgotten, and therefore brief consideration of what is best among their achievements should not be omitted.

Writers of Prose

14. The Minor Authors. — Under this caption come William Austin, John James Audubon, John Pendleton Kennedy, and William Gilmore Simms. Audubon was a naturalist, a great student of birds, and Austin, Kennedy, and Simms were writers of fiction, — Austin of New England, and Kennedy and Simms of the South.

15. William Austin, a Boston lawyer, is famous for his tale of *Peter Rugg, the Missing Man*, a story first published

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in 1824. It is a short-story, vividly and cleverly told, of an impatient and profane man who was one day driving with his little daughter in an open chaise, or chair as it was then called, when a storm was brewing, and, upon being warned that he should tarry at a certain place until the storm had stayed, swore that he would see home that night or "may I never see home!" From that time he drives on, ever in search of his home, a storm cloud always in his wake, his nervous, white-footed black horse clattering thunderingly, the man anxious, the little girl frightened, and all who see them alarmed even more because they think they are seeing ghosts. Finally, when, in order that the state may receive its back taxes, the public auctioneer is asking for bids upon land where Peter Rugg's house had once stood, the group of horse, chaise, man, and daughter appears at the site of the house, in Middle Street, Boston; but Peter Rugg is told by a sepulchral voice coming from the midst of the crowd that his wife and neighbors are gone, his home gone, and that he can never have another home in this world. The story lacks only a practised hand and a more somber atmosphere to make it one of the best of the tales of the supernatural.

16. John James Audubon was born in Louisiana in 1780. His father was an officer of the French navy, with property interests in America. His mother was of Spanish descent. Audubon, therefore, was a Creole of the Creoles, and Louisiana is still ardent in her admiration of him. The young Audubon saw much of tropic life in San Domingo, was trained in art in the studio of the great French sculptor David, in Paris, and then came to live at his father's country place in Pennsylvania upon the banks of the Schuylkill River. He made various ventures in mercantile and milling business, but always failed as a financier. All this time he had been filling his portfolio with amazingly realistic pictures of birds and bird-life. He went to England, where, to use the words of his diary, he was "fêted, feasted, elected

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honorary member of various societies," and where he found many rich persons to subscribe to his forthcoming illustrated work on birds, at $1000 a copy, a large sum, but the great work, *Birds of America*, cost $100,000 to publish. It was a notable contribution to the science of ornithology.

17. John Pendleton Kennedy, whose home was in Baltimore, was a successful lawyer and Congressman, and Secretary of the Navy under President Filmore. During his secretaryship, he distinguished himself by his strong encouragement of the Arctic explorations of Dr. Kane, and of the Japanese expedition of Commodore Perry. Kennedy was the author of various works, among them romances, a biography, and political essays. The book most popular in his lifetime was *Horse-Shoe Robinson*, a romance of colonial Maryland; but his best work was *Swallow Barn, or a Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, published in 1832. It is a pleasant story of Virginia country life, written in a genial vein. But Kennedy will be best known to the future because he was the kindest of friends to Edgar Allan Poe, when the poet was in direst need. The English novelist, Thackeray, is said to have asked Kennedy to write a chapter for his novel *The Virginians*, though it is rather doubtful whether Kennedy did write, as is alleged, the fourth chapter of the second volume of that great book.

18. William Gilmore Simms has been ranked as the most important man of letters, with the exception of Poe, which the South produced before the Civil War. He was a most fertile author, producing as many as fifty volumes in twenty years, though to-day he is more respected than read. His work was forceful, even if hasty; but its force was counterbalanced by its prejudice, all his gentlemen being Southerners and all his scalawags from the North. Among his fifty or more volumes are included poetry, descriptive sketches, criticism, history, biography, essays, dramas, short-stories, border romances, and novels. With all of this writing,

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Simms found time to be first a druggist, then a lawyer, then an editor of a magazine, and a lecturer.

Simms is a transition writer, his best fiction looking backwards to the earlier successes of James Fenimore Cooper and much of it anticipating the frontier tales of Bret Harte. The *Yemassee* is his most popular piece of fiction, though little more important in subject matter or in style than one or two of his other novels. It was published in 1835 and is a story of Southern Indians and of colonial life in his native South Carolina. With a fair degree of assurance we may predict permanency for at least two others of his many books, *Eutaw*, a story of the Revolutionary times, and *The Cassique of Kiawah*, a tale of the early days of Charleston.

James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851)

19. James Fenimore Cooper was born at Burlington, New Jersey, in 1789. In 1790 the family removed to Cooperstown, on the shores of Otsego Lake, New York, where Cooper's father had founded a settlement. Here Jim Cooper, as he was called in his youth, became acquainted with the out-of-door life which later supplied the background and atmosphere for many of his famous novels. Cooper was a student in Yale College from 1802 to 1805, then served as a midshipman in the American navy for six years. It was this navy life which gave him experience for the writing of his sea stories. Cooper became a man of fiery energy, self-confident, headstrong, even irritable, stalwart in appearance, with "an air of consequence," — "a very castle of a man," said Irving. A glance at his portrait reveals the antithesis to the placid, serene-tempered Irving. It was Cooper's self-confidence and self-assertion, the abundant energy of his robust body and mind, which made it possible for him to write those great novels which no one ever forgets.

20. Cooper's Best Novels are the following, all but two of them written before 1837:

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The Spy	1821
The Pioneers	1823
The Pilot	1824
The Last of the Mohicans	1826
The Prairie	1827
Red Rover	1828
The Pathfinder	1840
The Deerslayer	1841

The Spy was based upon a story told by John Jay, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, about a most fearless and unselfish American spy during the time of the Revolutionary war. Out of the slight materials of this story as told him by Jay, Cooper created the noble figure of Harvey Birch, a real addition to the world's great characters in fiction. That this story and this character were of importance is evident when we reflect that, as Donald G. Mitchell has said, there have been men in this country, in Great Britain, and on the European continent, who have modeled their lives on lines traceable in the career of Harvey Birch, and have been proud of so doing. The modesty, purposeful strength, self-effacement, devotion, and fidelity of this spy to the cause of the American Revolution make a record which,

J. Fenimore Cooper

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even if only one of fiction, may well find emulation in life.

21. The Leatherstocking Tales. — *The Pioneers* is the first of the five "Leatherstocking Tales," though not the first in the logical development of the chief character in that series of novels. According to Cooper's preface to *Deerslayer*, the order of the books, taking as a guide the life of Leatherstocking, or Deerslayer, or Hawkeye, or Natty Bumpo, as he was variously known, should be *Deerslayer*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pathfinder*, *The Pioneers*, *The Prairie*. *The Pioneers* is the least interesting to most readers. The book paints scenes, describes characters, and relates incidents familiar to its author during his boyhood days at the home in Cooperstown, but Natty Bumpo does not yet stand out as the greatest of all backwoods characters in fiction. There is considerable difference of opinion among readers, critical and uncritical, as to whether *The Last of the Mohicans* or *Deerslayer* is the best of this series of five novels; and *The Pathfinder*, with its impressive forest landscapes, was highly, if not extravagantly, praised by the noted French novelist Balzac. The best advice for the student of American literature is to read them all, and decide for himself. We are all likely to agree that even *The Prairie* contains two of the best scenes Cooper has depicted, the death of Leatherstocking and the prairie fire. We are likely to agree also that the character of Leatherstocking everywhere dominates all others; as Lowell has, rather severely, put it:

> He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
> One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
> Of this fresh Western World; and, the thing not to mince,
> He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
> His Indians — with proper respect be it said —
> Are just Natty Bumpo daubed over with red.

Perhaps we may also agree that Cooper's women characters all

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from one model don't vary,
All sappy as maples, and flat as a prairie.

We may even assent to Mark Twain's criticism, —

It is a restful chapter in any of his books when somebody doesn't step on a dry twig and alarm all the reds and whites for two hundred yards around. Every time a Cooper person is in peril, and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, he is sure to step on a dry twig. Cooper requires him to turn out and find a dry twig; and if he can't do it, to go and borrow one. In fact, the Leatherstocking series ought to have been called the Broken Twig series.

Among Cooper's several sea stories, *The Pilot* and *Red Rover* surpass all the others. Just as in *The Spy* he had an actual military hero for his model, so in *The Pilot* he had a real naval hero for his prototype, the redoubtable John Paul Jones. Yet Long Tom Coffin in this same book is a character exceeding in interest even John Paul Jones. There are no dull pages from Cooper's pen when he is writing of the sea. All is life, — sailors, the sea, the very ships themselves.

It was the success of Sir Walter Scott that led Cooper to begin his work, and Cooper has often been called the American Scott. He *is* an American through and through; but not an imitator of the "Wizard of the North." His reputation will stand upon its own feet. His imagination was kindled by the reading of The Waverley Novels, and some of his themes are similar to those of their author; but they are all unique and distinctive in detail. Cooper is, with the exception of Hawthorne, the greatest of American novelists.

22. Cooper's Historical Work. — Cooper did some able historical work during his last years, writing a *History of the United States Navy*, which was published in 1839. But the best books he wrote after 1837 were two of the "Leather-Stocking Tales," *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841). While Cooper's books were in process of publica-

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tion in America, they were coming out at the same time in thirty cities of Europe. Many of the translations contained things more astonishing to us than the originals. A French translator, for example, understood Cooper's locust trees to be insects, and had two dragoons use the noisy-winged pests as hitching-posts! The latest years of the author were embittered by controversies with newspapers, controversies which aroused in Cooper early prejudices against many crudities in the American life of that day. But the woods and waters of Cooper's novels and sea-tales, and his leading characters, too, were as distinctively American as nature had made them. Their author loved America; and had the Coopers remained in their old home at Shakespeare's birthplace in Warwickshire, we might have had great literature from their most distinguished descendant, but we should not have had Harvey Birch, Deerslayer, Chingachgook, and Long Tom Coffin.

Writers of Verse

23. Popular Poems of the Period. — The verse-writers of this second half of the early nineteenth century period receive little attention from readers of to-day, with the exception of those authors who became the leading men of letters in America during the decades that follow this period; and they, Bryant, Emerson, Holmes, and Poe, will be discussed in the following chapter. Richard Henry Dana, Sr., Richard Henry Wilde, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Joseph Rodman Drake, and, of even less importance as poets, John Howard Payne, Samuel Woodworth, Edward Coate Pinkney, and George Pope Morris, each appears destined to be popularly known by only one poem.

Richard Henry Dana (father of the well-known author of *Two Years Before the Mast*) produced in "The Little Beach-Bird" an old-fashioned, yet graceful and exquisite piece of poetry. Richard Henry Wilde's "My Life is Like a Summer Rose" is one of the most notable bits of fugitive poetry from the early days of our literature. Much scholarly study

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has been expended upon the work of Halleck and of Drake, but the historical lyric of "Marco Bozzaris" by the former and the patriotic declamation upon "The American Flag" by the latter are all that have survived from them in the public memory. "The Old Oaken Bucket," by Woodworth, and Morris's well-known song, "Woodman, Spare that tree!" are still dear to the popular heart. No collection of American lyrics would be complete without Pinkney's "A Health," some of whose lines have at some time been upon the lips of every one. And everywhere is sung one song, "Home, Sweet Home," from the opera of *Clari, the Maid of Milan*, by the actor and dramatist, John Howard Payne. Love of nature, patriotism, and wholesome domestic sentiment characterize the verse of those days. Doubtless those qualities will keep it alive.

John Howard Payne

BEST BOOKS UPON THE PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

A History of American Literature, WILLIAM P. TRENT. (D. Appleton and Company.)

Little Journeys to the Homes of American Authors (*Second Series*), by various authors. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

A General Survey of American Literature, MARY FISHER. (A. C. McClurg and Company.)

An American Anthology, EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

The New England Poets, WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON. (The Macmillan Company.)

A History of American Verse, J. L. ONDERDONK. (A. C. McClurg.)

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CHAPTER IV

THE MID-CENTURY PERIOD

(1837–1861)

1. The Approach of the Irrepressible Conflict. — From 1837 to 1861 the American nation prospered as no prophet could possibly have predicted any nation would prosper. The Northern States became incredibly wealthy, mainly through manufacturing, shipping, and the development of the virgin soil. The Southern States were no less blessed through the growth of the great cotton, rice, tobacco, and sugar plantations. And both North and South expanded westward over the fertile plains, the almost endless forests, and the rich mining districts which had been acquired from France and from Mexico.

In New England an aristocracy of wealth arose, as also in New York and the other Middle States, and an almost feudal system of society in the slave-holding States. Along with this cleavage between an upper and a lower class, there grew up a group of men in all parts of the country, especially in New England and in the prairie States, who had not forgotten the democratic principles of the fathers of the nation. This group of men was, with increasing insistence, demanding full freedom for all individuals, negroes included, and urging at the same time a firmer control by the central government at Washington over citizenship in all the various States. These demands for more freedom of the individual in private life and for a more perfect union among the commonwealths in public affairs, and the corresponding opposition to these demands, made the period one of deep-

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est intellectual and political excitement, and, in the end, brought the irrepressible conflict to a head in the clash of war between free and slave-holding States.

2. The Literary Situation. — Few of the authors of the years between 1837 and 1861 will long be read. Irving and Cooper continued their work, it is true, from the previous era, but only three other prose writers, Emerson, Poe, and Hawthorne, will stand comparison with great writers in the literature of other nations. Certainly there were less than a dozen memorable poets. With rare exceptions, indeed, it has always been true that the permanent literature of nations has been produced neither during times of great material prosperity, nor during times of intense conflict. Not until the prosperity and the conflict have become things of the past do they seem to be rightly understood and authoritatively interpreted in literature. These writers of the Mid-century, those years when civil strife was becoming more and more imminent, may be classified as Orators, Historians, Essayists, Fiction-writers, and Poets.

Writers of Prose

3. The Orators. — Even for a country which more than any other modern nation has always and throughout its whole breadth assiduously cultivated the art of public speaking, this was the golden age of American oratory. These pre-Civil war days bred legions of speakers for and against the public measures of the day, many of the speakers engaged primarily in seeking office, but many purely disinterested, intent only upon the public good. The leading pulpit orators of the day were unquestionably William Ellery Channing and Theodore Parker, the former a competent writer as well as speaker. Both these men were devoted to the great affairs of state as firmly as to those of the church. William Ware, clergyman and novelist, was only second to them in influence. The leading orators, publicists chiefly by

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profession, were Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, Edward Everett, Charles Sumner, and Daniel Webster, of New England; Stephen A. Douglas, and Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois; William H. Seward of New York; Henry Clay of Kentucky; Alexander Stephens of Georgia; and Robert Y. Hayne and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina.

4. John C. Calhoun. — It is doubtful whether the speeches of these men, if we except those of Calhoun, Webster, and Lincoln, will long be read by any but historians and special students of oratory. Lincoln's really memorable addresses were not, as a matter of fact, delivered until after the coming of the war, and hence belong to the next period. Calhoun, perhaps, will find fewer and fewer readers in time to come, aside from those who are searching for the strict constructionist's point of view of the Constitution of the United States. Calhoun was an able lawyer. He also held positions under the national government as Congressman, Secretary of War, Vice-President, Senator, and Secretary of State. His name is forever associated in our history with opposition to the right of the Federal government to tax, with the doctrine of States' Rights, and with defense of slavery. Unfortunately his great abilities always attached themselves to the advocacy of losing causes; nevertheless, it is this fact that has cast much of the glamour of romance about his fame. Yet if all the great leaders of public opinion in America during the first half of the nineteenth century had felt towards slavery as Jefferson when he exclaimed, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just," we should have been spared the four years of terrible war which devastated the nation from 1861 to 1865. Though Calhoun's ideas of liberty did not have universal application, yet he was a champion for rights as he understood them, and his understanding of them became that of the Southerners generally. Among his ablest speeches was one upon States' rights delivered in 1837 in connection with the pro-

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posal for admission of Michigan as a State of the Union, another delivered in 1840 upon the Right of Petition, and a third, his Senate speech in 1850, urging repeal of the Congressional legislation known in history as the Missouri Compromise. Calhoun's reasoning was sound and convincing, granted the premises with which he started.

5. Daniel Webster, a more commanding figure, belongs with the world's greatest orators, — Demosthenes, Cicero, Bossuet, Burke, and Lincoln. In Carlyle's correspondence with Emerson, there occurs this description of Webster's dynamic appearance:

Daniel Webster

Not many days ago I saw at breakfast the notablest of all your Notabilities, Daniel Webster. He is a magnificent specimen. You might say to all the world: This is your Yankee Englishman, such limbs we make in Yankeeland. As a Logic-fencer, Advocate, or Parliamentary Hercules, one would incline to back him at first sight against all the extant world. The tanned complexion, that amorphous, crag-like face; the dull black eyes under their precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces, needing only to be *blown;* the mastiff-mouth, accurately closed: — I have not traced as much of *silent Berserker-rage,* that I know of, in any other man.

Webster was born in New Hampshire in 1782, though most of his public life was lived in Boston. He became Congressman, United States Senator, and was twice Secretary of State. Like many of our greatest men, he was not as a politician sufficiently popular to become President, though he

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aspired to that office. Though he was a great lawyer, having in his day only two or three peers in his profession, his popular fame was achieved on the public platform rather than in court. Among his many noble addresses and Congressional speeches are: the speech (1830) in reply to one delivered in the United States Senate by Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina on States' Rights; the address at the completion of the Bunker Hill monument in 1843; and his last important speech in the Senate, March 7th, 1850, entitled *For the Constitution and the Union.*

6. **Webster's style** was imposing, substantial, strong, and clear. He was a profound student of Milton, Homer, and the English Bible, and the loftiness and sonority of his style he attributed in large degree to these studies. He made arduous preparation for his speeches, manifesting much anxiety over them; usually he wrote them out in full and committed them to memory. He said that all his life up to the time of the *Reply to Hayne* had been a preparation for that speech, and that all the written material had been gathering in his desk for months before the debate. "No man," he asserted, "is ever inspired by the occasion; I never was." Two ideas dominated his thought. First, that the historic march of time is progressive; and, second, that the Union must be maintained at any cost. In advocating these ideas, Webster became the most powerful actor of his time on the political stage. A Scottish writer has called him "the grandest post-Revolution figure of the New World."

7. **The Historians.** — America has produced four great historians, Prescott, Bancroft, Motley, and Parkman, whose work compares worthily with that of the ablest historians in other countries. Parkman, the greatest of the four, belongs to the next period of our literary history.

8. **William Hickling Prescott** was born at the old Puritan town of Salem, Massachusetts, in 1796. While a student at Harvard College a piece of bread thrown by a fellow-student

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made. Prescott nearly blind for the rest of his life. However, with the help of readers and private secretaries (for he was well-to-do), and a writing machine made for the blind, he set to work to achieve his ambitious plans for life work, and with great patience and prolonged study brought forth the most picturesque and artistic, though not the most thoughtful, histories written by any American. His four works are *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella* (1837), *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843), *History of the Conquest of Peru* (1847), and *History of the Reign of Philip the Second* (1855–58).

William H. Prescott

9. Character of Prescott's Work. — Prescott chose Spanish characters and Spanish history, in the Old World and in the New, largely because historians had not yet treated them adequately. This historian had much of the temperament and the vision of the poet. He had also the clear intellectual outlook upon periods and movements which is said to characterize men deprived of physical sight. Like Macaulay, he had a marvelous memory. His biographer, George Ticknor, says that Prescott could carry in his memory for many days the equivalent of sixty pages of printed matter, and would think it through, rewording, rephrasing, and rearranging the material, as he walked or rode for his daily exercise.

Prescott's first history, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, had back of it years of preliminary study of the characters and the time in which they lived; then the author spent ten full

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years in the composition of the book, — a great lesson for those who think that a good book can be produced "off-hand," or that the artistic writer is one who, instead of being patiently analytic and thoughtful, just sits down and dashes something off at white-heat. The book merited all the time spent upon it. Many a boy has read the story of the return of Columbus as eagerly as a story from the *Arabian Nights;* and yet the book presents the most comprehensive view ever given of Spain at the time of her greatness.

The Conquest of Mexico and the *Conquest of Peru* were even more novel in theme, and have been more popular than the first history. His treatment of the ancient civilization of the Aztecs and the Incas reads like fairy lore. Although recent investigations among the remains of these old civilizations have revealed them to have been not quite so powerful, populous, and well advanced as Prescott thought, yet it has been only the details of his account and not his judgments that have been called in question. His consummate descriptions and vivid narration make him still popular with many who, as a general rule, care little for written history.

His last work, the *History of the Reign of Philip the Second,* remained unfinished at his death. The subject is somber, and the style, as was fitting, is less brilliant than that of the author's previous books; but it is the most thoughtful of them all.

10. George Bancroft, the foremost chronicler of our own history, was born at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1800, dying ninety-one years later, in the city of Washington. Bancroft had an important share both in the making of his country's history and in producing a permanent record of that history. After holding several minor public positions of trust, he became Secretary of the Navy in 1845, and established the Naval Academy at Annapolis. His diplo-

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matic gifts led to his appointment first as United States minister to Great Britain, and later to Germany.

11. Bancroft as an Historical Writer. — Bancroft wrote two ponderous works, a *History of the United States*, in ten volumes, eight of which were published before 1861, and a *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States*, in two volumes, published in his eighty-second year. Bancroft was a learned man, often writing with such minute detail as to become wearisome to the general reader. Yet many passages of his histories, as was the fashion in the history writing of his time, are highly oratorical, and glow with fervor over the political glories of the nation he was undertaking to understand and to celebrate. A few sentences from Bancroft's judgment of the character of Washington will illustrate his best style:

George Bancroft

> His faculties were so well balanced and combined that his constitution, free from excess, was tempered evenly with all the elements of activity, and his mind resembled a well-ordered commonwealth; his passions, which had the intensest vigor, owned allegiance to reason; and, with all the fiery quickness of his spirit, his impetuous and massive will was held in check by consummate judgment. . . . Integrity was so completely the law of his nature that a planet would sooner have shot from its sphere than he have departed from his uprightness, which was so constant that it seemed to be almost impersonal.

Two more sentences reveal Bancroft's attitude toward our American political institutions:

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Other governments are convulsed by innovations and reforms. . . . Our constitution, fixed in the affections of the people, from whose choice it has sprung, neutralizes the influence of foreign principles, and fearlessly opens an asylum to the virtuous, the unfortunate, and the oppressed of every nation.

12. John Lothrop Motley, born at Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1814, was, like many other American men of letters, trained for the legal profession. He soon found the study of history more attractive, and gave his attention to historical research and writing. Like many another of our literary men, Motley served his country abroad, as minister to Austria for six years, and as minister to Great Britain for one year. He ardently loved human liberty, so ardently that of his writings Bryant could say that they will

> In the answering hearts of millions raise
> The generous zeal for Right and Liberty.

Motley spoke of the United States as "the mightiest republic of modern history — mighty and stable because it was founded upon an idea." It was interest in this idea that led to his enthusiasm for the history of the Low Countries, or Netherlands, of Europe, which through centuries had struggled for civil and religious liberty. He wrote three books concerning that region, never as if looking on from afar, but as if active in the very midst of the conflict. The three books are *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, *A History of the United Netherlands*, and *The Life and Death of John Barneveld*. The last two were completed during the next period of our literary history, after 1861, but so naturally grew from the first that they should be considered with it.

13. In *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, Motley showed himself to be capable of shrewd character analysis, particularly in the portraits of the Duchess Margaret of Alva, Alexander of Parma, William the Silent, and that evil genius Philip II himself. Motley, like Carlyle, was a hero-wor-

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shiper. His style, too, appears to have been influenced by Carlyle, or at least so the titles of some of his chapters indicate, as, for example, "Sowing the Wind," "The First Whirlwind," and "The Taciturn." Yet his style, though less powerful than that of Carlyle, is more pleasing, for it lacks Carlyle's forced and strident mannerisms. The eloquent tribute to Sir Philip Sidney, in the *History of the United Netherlands*, so far as mere style is concerned, surpasses anything Carlyle ever wrote:

John Lothrop Motley

> It is impossible not to contemplate with affection so radiant a figure, shining through the cold mists of that Zeeland winter, and that distant and disastrous epoch. There is hardly a character in history upon which the imagination can dwell with more unalloyed delight. Not in romantic fiction was there ever created a more attractive incarnation of martial valour, poetic genius, and purity of heart. If the mocking spirit of the soldier of Lepanto could "smile chivalry away," the name alone of his English contemporary is potent enough to conjure it back again, so long as humanity is alive to the nobler impulses.

In this second book, Motley continued his gallery of portraits, and is especially successful with Queen Elizabeth of England, Mary, Queen of Scots, the Earl of Leicester, and Henry of Navarre.

14. Motley's Animus. — It has often been remarked that Motley hated so intensely all things Spanish that he could not deal impartially with them or with their political and religious ideas. Yet he was as much an enemy of the ex-

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treme adherents to the faith of Calvinism as to the Spanish Catholics. This fact is evident in his monograph upon John of Barneveld, who sided in Holland with the Remonstrants against the five strict tenets of Calvinism. It appears that Motley was opposed to any and all systems of ecclesiastical and civil dogmas which revealed the ingenious powers of man's mind rather than his concern with things of the spirit.

Some critics have made the claim for Motley that his work has been the most original, most thoughtful, and most popular, too, in the field of history and biography since that of Macaulay. This is, perhaps, too high a claim; but America may well honor the memory of an historian the soundness of whose scholarship and the vividness of whose style are generally acknowledged.

15. The Essayists. — Many writers of essays flourished during the two decades before the civil war. The works of most of them will not endure. The best of those authors whose essays now appear to have been of only temporary value were Donald G. Mitchell (Ik Marvel), Nathaniel P. Willis, and George William Curtis. However, there were Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, and Holmes; yet even of these Poe displayed extraordinary inequality of both judgment and style. Only readers who are fond of Poe's poems and short-stories, or only those who are technical students of the art of poetry or of the art of the short-story, will find time to read the essays in which he elaborated his theories concerning the mechanics of verse and of narrative. Emerson will survive by virtue of many single essays; Holmes through three books of essays, held together by the thinnest thread of narrative; and Thoreau will live as an abler thinker than Holmes and a more practical idealist than Emerson. Only Thoreau will be discussed at this point, the essays of Poe, Emerson, and Holmes being reserved until we consider their other forms of literary production.

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16. Henry David Thoreau. — Among the New England idealists who called themselves transcendentalists Emerson was the chief writer. Margaret Fuller and Bronson Alcott were the chief talkers, or leaders of "conversations," as they called their lectures; and Henry David Thoreau, one of the chief thinkers, was the recluse. To-day, Thoreau's mind has come out of its seclusion and aloofness, and his thoughts each year are more and more stimulating the minds of men. It seems not improbable that Thoreau's thought may become even more influential than that of Emerson, for it is not only almost as profound, but is much more directly practical. While Thoreau cultivated solitude and simplicity, he was thinking of man and man's life. Even when his thought is most strongly concentrated upon the facts of external nature, there is in that thought the subtlest of binding connections between the interpretation of nature and the *use* of that interpretation for the betterment of the life of man.

Henry D. Thoreau

17. Thoreau's Mode of Life. — Thoreau reduced his needs to their lowest terms. He believed that "a man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can do without." Six weeks of work a year, at making pencils, at carpentry, masonry, and a little tutoring, sufficed to earn his living. For the rest of the time he rambled about New England, thought, and wrote. Early in his career he tried to lecture, and failed. But in the closing days of his life he successfully addressed his fellow-townsmen at Concord upon John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, identifying himself

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thus with the beginning of the greatest of civil contests in history.

18. Thoreau's Works, chiefly prose, are now published in eleven volumes. He wrote some verse that will live. One line from "Inspiration" is unforgettable:

Time cannot bend the line that God has writ.

He was a first-class scholar, well and thoughtfully informed in the history of literature. He wrote in a style like that of the ancient Greeks, — clear, simple, flexible, straightforward, firm. Though he had a library within doors, his study was out of doors. Thoreau loved nature continually and consistently. He looked at her, though, not mystically nor with any sentimental emotion, but with a scientific eye. He attached his mind to nature not as a dreamer, but as a close and discriminating observer. He had a fine, accurate physical and mental vision. His best books are *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, *The Maine Woods*, *Excursions in Field and Forest*, and *Cape Cod*. The first two are deservedly more popular than the others. *Walden* has had more fame than the *Week*, but is scarcely more delightful, charming, or thoughtful. They are all easy to read. Thoreau's writing fulfilled his own notion of how to write, as expressed in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, "A sentence should read as if its author, had he held a plough instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end." All Thoreau's published works were based upon the thirty closely written volumes of a Journal which he kept for over twenty-five years. He himself prepared from this Journal the *Week* (1849) and *Walden* (1854). Emerson and others edited from the Journal the other books which we have named. Emerson rightly said of Thoreau, "Wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a throne."

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19. Minor Fiction-writers. — The number of good novelists and short-story writers during the middle years of the nineteenth century was not large. Though Poe and Hawthorne were the great writers of fiction, and though Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote one great book, there are several writers of comparatively minor importance to be considered. Such are Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., and Herman Melville, each mainly a man of one book. *Georgia Scenes and Characters* (1840), by Longstreet, *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), by Dana, and *Typee* and *Moby Dick, or the White Whale* (1841), by Melville, have sufficed to make their authors famous. In Melville's day his *Typee*, recounting adventures in the South Seas, was almost as popular as *Moby Dick*. The latter is a thrilling story of the pursuit of an invincible whale, by the name of Moby Dick. Both of these narratives of adventure by Melville are among the greatest of sea stories. *Moby Dick* has been called "a madly eloquent romance of the sea."

20. Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* is a vigorous, healthful book, one of the very best of boys' stories of the sea. Now almost a century old, it is still much sought in public libraries. This fine, manly story has helped to keep alive American interest in the sea.

21. Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes and Characters* has been a book for older readers, and, in our day, only for those who are interested in details of local color and individuality in human life. But the book possesses humor, and an abundance of shrewd insight and wisdom. It is the work of a keenly observing eye-witness. These sketches have no rival in their field; they stand alone as depicting what cannot be seen again.

22. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is one of the dozen greatest books in our literature. Almost every one who reads knows this masterpiece among so-called purpose novels. The phrase "novel with a purpose" has come to mean, technically, a

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novel whose aim is practical, — social, religious, or political. From the point of view of accomplishing a practical purpose, this novel by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe has been the most successful written by an American. It was written as a result of the passing by Congress, in 1850, of the Fugitive Slave Bill, which required that citizens of free states should aid in recovering and restoring escaped slaves to their masters. Most of the attempts of slaves to reach the North had been due to the practice of selling them. Mrs. Stowe was at once aroused to vigorous protest, and in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* demonstrated the evils of the slave trade, incidentally showing that the institution of slavery was not a patriarchal institution, as the Southerners claimed; for in a patriarchal society human beings, even though slaves, are not treated as other property is treated; furthermore, a patriarchal society has always afforded protection to its slaves, whereas the practice of selling them was quite the opposite of protection. Despite the formidable nature of the argument of the book, the story is a quite simple one, so straightforwardly written that its argument is absorbed without more effort than is needed to follow an exciting and vivid story.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

23. Mrs. Stowe's Other Novels. — Mrs. Stowe's second purpose novel, *Dred*, undertook to exhibit the evil inflicted

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by the practice of slavery upon the slave-holding whites themselves. The story of *Dred* is more complex than that of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and therefore not so instantly appreciated by the hasty reader. Still, it is a fine study of Afro-American character, and an appalling arraignment of those who defended and attempted to perpetuate slavery.

Mrs. Stowe was successful in another kind of story writing, — namely, the faithful and realistic presentation of the life of New England as she had seen it during her youth. Her chief pictures of New England life were those of descendants of the Puritans, and were included in *The Minister's Wooing*, *Old Town Folks*, and *Poganuc People*. These books, though more artistically constructed than *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, lack the fervor of the more famous work. They attest her skill as a craftsman in writing, but the burning motive is absent. These New England stories of hers are important historically, when considered in connection with such later studies of rural life in New England as those by Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman.

Old Log Cabin

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)

24. Our Greatest Short-story Writer. — The life of Edgar Allan Poe has been told many times. Yet it is neither especially interesting nor edifying. Poe was born at Boston, in 1809. His parents were theater folk. They died before he was three years old. Upon his mother's death, in Rich-

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mond, Virginia, Edgar was adopted by a wealthy family by the name of Allan; hence his second name. He first went to the best school in Richmond, and later continued his schooling abroad for five years in a suburb of London. The headmaster of the school in London is said to have remarked that this clever boy was being allowed an extravagant amount of pocket money. The remark may throw some light upon the unfortunate nature of Poe's later career.

Edgar Allan Poe

25. The Publication of Poe's Verse. — In 1820 Poe was brought back to Richmond. In 1826 he entered the University of Virginia, but remained only one year. Not wishing to go into business, as his foster-father desired, he left home for Boston, where his first book of verse, *Tamerlane, and Other Poems*, was published, in 1827. Copies of this edition are now very rare; one copy sold in 1892 for $1850. After this first literary venture Poe enlisted in the army at Boston, and was detailed for duty at Fortress Monroe, where he became a sergeant-major. In 1829 his second volume of verse was printed, at Baltimore. Again he felt the lure of army life and in 1830 he entered West Point, shortly to be expelled because of his reckless habits. Before he left, however, a third small book of verse had been published.

26. Poe's Series of Editorships. — Poe achieved his first success as a short-story writer in 1833, by winning a hun-

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dred-dollar prize for *The Manuscript Found in a Bottle.* Now began his friendship with John P. Kennedy, who secured Poe's appointment to the editorial staff of a newly founded Richmond magazine. This was the first of a series of editorships in Richmond, Philadelphia, and New York. Poe lost them all because of his uncontrollable habit of intemperance.

Poe's best friends were N. P. Willis and J. P. Kennedy, both of whom tried to keep him in editorial positions. Lowell also befriended him, but passing through New York at one time and trying to call upon him, found him too intoxicated to be seen. Lowell in his *Fable for Critics* expressed the opinion that Poe was "three-fifths sheer fudge," the rest of him genius! Emerson called him the "jingle-maker." There have been able European critics, however, who have assigned him the first place in American literature.

27. Poe's Tales. — Whatever differences of opinion there may be regarding his poetry, few critics have failed to delight in his prose stories. Most of these stories appeared first in magazines, and their fearful beauty redeemed many an otherwise vapid issue. Poe's first collection of stories bore the fitting title *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque.* Another title for a collection was *Tales of Ratiocination.* The stories in this collection were not quite so fantastic as those in the earlier book; they were the product of the intellect rather than of the emotion or the fancy. Poe's plots resemble logical demonstrations; his characters are like mathematical symbols rather than actual human beings. They do little talking; they are shifted about to carry on the demonstration. His themes were taken either from his reading or evolved in his own mind; never from observation of life itself.

28. Classification of Poe's Stories. — We might group the greater number of his stories under the heads of pseudo-scientific tales, detective stories, and tales of terror. In the

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first group we should place such stories as *The Manuscript Found in a Bottle, The Descent into the Maelstrom, The Adventures of Hans Pfaal;* in the second group, such stories as *The Gold-Bug, The Murders in the Rue Morgue, The Mystery of Marie Roget, The Purloined Letter;* and in the third group, such as *The Pit and the Pendulum, The Black Cat, The Tell-tale Heart, The Fall of the House of Usher, Berenice, The Cask of Amontillado, The Masque of the Red Death,* and *Ligeia.* The third group admits of subdivision, for while all within it deal with the strange and the terrible, the *House of Usher, Amontillado,* and the *Red Death* are more than mere tales of terror. They, and others like them, are thoughtful attempts to show Poe's solution for certain imagined problems.

From this classification it will be seen that the stories of Poe pass through a sort of sequence, not necessarily chronological, — some being concerned with the tracing out of mere puzzles, like *The Gold-Bug,* some with startling but half probable scientific adventures, like *The Adventures of Hans Pfaal,* some conveying impressions of pure horror, like *The Black Cat,* and some equally terrible though more highly imaginative, like *Ligeia. Ligeia* is, all things considered, the best of all his stories. It is a story of the human will conquering even the unconquerable, — Death.

Poe wrote one impressive study of the moral life, the allegory of conscience entitled *William Wilson,* part of which was founded upon his school experience in England. *The Assignation* is his one story in which the love element is the chief interest. Possibly his finest descriptive work is to be found in *The Domain of Arnheim.* Poe has only one long story to his credit, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym,* a narrative of the horrors endured by a shipwrecked crew, ending in the description of the awful mysteries of the region of the Antarctic pole. A few readers have considered this his best work.

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Poe probably could not have written a good novel. He knew too little about the manners and customs of human society, too little about the thoughts and feelings of any individual but himself. Also, he had too fitful a will to allow him to carry on and complete the long and exacting task of working through the plot of a first-rate novel. But his short-stories are the most nearly perfect of their kinds, if indeed they are not the most nearly perfect of all kinds, at least in workmanship. And they are Poesque; no one has ever successfully imitated them.

Poe Cottage, Fordham, New York

29. Poe's Criticism. — Poe's prose works included at least four critical essays of lasting merit. These essays are so intimately related to Poe's practice in the composition of short-stories that one who reads the stories is sure to be interested in the theory of the art of fiction set forth in the critical essays. The fact is that the modern short-story emerged as a conscious form of art with Poe's publication of *Berenice* in 1835, and the technique of the short-story engaged critical attention for the first time when Poe in 1842 published in *Graham's Magazine* his article upon "Hawthorne's Tales."

Four of Poe's essays are of importance in the realm of criticism, *The Poetic Principle*, *The Philosophy of Composition*, *The Rationale of Verse*, and the one upon *Hawthorne's Tales*. The first enunciates the principles which Poe thought underlie poetry. The purpose of poetry, he believed, is to express our yearning for the beauty of which we dream;

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hence the poet, in his attempt to express the beautiful, may alter the apparent facts of life as he likes, in his continual striving to reveal harmony where none was apparent before. Poetry, according to his definition, is the rhythmic creation of beauty. But such a thing as a long poem, Poe held, cannot exist, for the only legitimate effect of a poem is to excite the soul of the reader, and this excitement dies if the verses run in number beyond, say, one hundred lines. It is easy enough, to be sure, to pick flaws in all the phases of this theory.

In *The Philosophy of Composition* Poe tells how he wrote *The Raven*, and maintains that all short-stories as well as poems should be written in accordance with the same methods. Any student ambitious to write short-stories will profit by a careful study of the eight or ten points which Poe makes in this discussion of the materials and methods of effective fiction. It has frequently been said that Poe was perpetrating a hoax when he described the manner in which he composed *The Raven*, but those who write know that much literature has its beginnings in some such way as he outlines in this essay.

The Rationale of Verse is concerned chiefly with Poe's theory of metre. Unless one is vitally interested in the subject, it is a somewhat tedious essay, but it shows a keen and masterful study of both ancient and modern verse.

The essay on *Hawthorne's Tales*, while more superficial than the other three essays, effectively applies some of their ideas, and is perpetually quoted. Its leading idea is contained in the following paragraph:

> A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but, having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he invents such incidents, — he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the out-

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bringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel.

30. The Music of Poe's Verse. — Edgar Allan Poe alone among American poets in the brief years between 1825 and 1850 won world-wide recognition. Poe resembles Keats in his choice of words evoking rich images; his phrases, like Swinburne's, sing themselves into the memory. There is the same quality of imagination in "The Haunted Palace" as there is in "Kubla Khan." The sum of his lyrics is small, only about fifty poems, but the haunting melody peculiar to them is unique in American poetry. Of the best poems, "Israfel" and "To Helen" appeared in 1831; "To One in Paradise," in 1834; "The Raven," in 1845; and "Ulalume," "The Bells," "The City in the Sea," and "Annabel Lee," during the two last years of his life, 1848 and 1849. The poems have one theme, — himself. They reveal his love for woman, or his passion for music, or his sombre and despairing attraction for the "under-natural." "To Helen," "Annabel Lee," and "To One in Paradise" express the love for ideal woman. "Israfel," "Ulalume," "The Bells," and others not mentioned above, such as "Ligeia" (which name later became the title of his best short-story), are expressions of his interest in melodic form. "The Raven," "The City in the Sea," "The Conqueror Worm," and "The Haunted Palace" reflect Poe's almost maddening melancholy and despair.

It is difficult to refrain from quoting many of these poems entire, but to every one who reads poetry they are familiar and easily accessible. The student should write his own music for

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Ligeia! Ligeia!
My beautiful one:
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run.

Of "To One in Paradise," the best stanza is:

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy grey eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams —
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

"The Bells" and "The Raven" have been recited by English-speaking youth the world over. Even when Poe was most under the influence of music, as in "The Bells," he was not free from the weight of sadness, —

And the people, — ah, the people, —
They that dwell up in the steeple
All alone,
And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone, —
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human,
They are Ghouls.

The strange, sublime, mystically glowing pictures, terrible, occasionally, in actual hideousness, in "The City in the Sea" are unexcelled in verse or on canvas. They never leave the mind unshaken, —

While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

The three lines in "To Helen"

Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome

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have summarized in unequalled form the effect of two ancient civilizations.

No muse was ever more magical than the one which in "The Haunted Palace" led Poe to pen

> Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
> On its roof did float and flow,
> (This — all this — was in the olden
> Time long ago);
> And every gentle air that dallied,
> In that sweet day,
> Along the ramparts, plumed and pallid,
> A wingèd odor went away.

Only Shakespeare, in the lines beginning "Take, oh, Take those lips away," in "Measure for Measure," has written a more pure compelling music than Poe in "Israfel," —

> In Heaven a spirit doth dwell,
> "Whose heartstrings are a lute."
> . . . . . .
> And they say (the starry choir
> And the other listening things)
> That Israfeli's fire
> Is owing to that lyre
> By which he sits and sings, —
> The trembling living wire
> Of those unusual strings.
> . . . . . .
> If I could dwell
> Where Israfel
> Hath dwelt, and he where I,
> He might not sing so wildly well
> A mortal melody, —
> While a bolder note than this might swell
> From my lyre within the sky.

31. Poe's Later Poems. — Poe's most mature work was in the poems entitled "The Raven," "The Bells," "Annabel Lee," and "For Annie," though "The Bells" is, as true

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poetry, inferior to the remaining three. These lyrics reveal that Poe was endowed with a most sensitive organization, "all touch, all eye, all ear." Few poets of any nation have had such a rare gift of melody as these poems disclose, nor has any poet or artist ever had a more worshipful passion for loveliness.

But the poems which best show his sensitiveness to physical loveliness, his gift of melody, and his almost idolatrous love of beauty, betray also certain of his limitations. To the melancholy aspects of life he most quickly responded, and they are not the most healthful. Then, too, Poe's music is largely in single strains; he had not the sustained power of the maker of a symphony. Furthermore, the beauty he worshiped was not truth as Keats rightly conceived it to be, but that beauty which tends to become "barbaric extravagance." Yet the last of his lyrics, "Annabel Lee," is far from extravagant. It is one of the most simple in imagery, as it is in melody. The movement of the verse is said to have been a making-over of that of a plaintive Southern negro song. In any event, its dirge-like ideas and pictures might be experienced by the least imaginative of persons who have been deeply bereaved. "Ulalume" is of a higher order. Both the beautiful dirge "Annabel Lee" and the requiem "Ulalume" appear to have been written in memory of his dead wife, as also the poem "For Annie."

The date of "The Raven" is 1845. This poem could hardly have been written earlier, not before Poe's later years. It is too self-possessed, too well made. Only a mature mind and hand could have thought and molded many of its phrases. Poe's account of the method by which he built the poem is more than half true. The method is described in his essay in criticism entitled *The Philosophy of Composition.*

As for "The Bells," the story of its writing is that while visiting at the house of a Mrs. M. L. Shaw, Poe complained

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that he had to write a poem but totally lacked inspiration for it. Church bells were ringing, and Poe expressed irritation at the noise they were making. Mrs. Shaw wrote at the top of a piece of paper "The Bells, by E. A. Poe." Then, for a first line, she jotted down "The bells, the little silver bells," and after Poe had finished one stanza, wrote "The heavy iron bells," and handed the paper to him again for finishing. Thus the poem originated, and grew under his hands. Nearly all of Poe's finest qualities, and all of his least valuable ones, are illustrated in this poem.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864)

32. America's Foremost Novelist. — The Hawthorne family began its life in America with the coming of William Hathorne (he spelled his name without the "w") in the company led by John Winthrop, founder of Massachusetts Bay Colony. William Hathorne, a Puritan, made life most uncomfortable for the Quakers in the colony. His son, as became his inheritance, became a Judge, and a persecutor of the Salem "witches." The Hawthornes of later generations, including Nathaniel (born July 4, 1804, at Salem), always felt, or claimed to feel, that the curse of the witches had never been lifted from the family. Doubtless this was their whimsical excuse for a somewhat unprosperous financial condition, which always prevailed among them. No doubt, too, the Hawthornes had a family pride in the inherited ban, because it would seem that only a lineage strong and masterful could have survived with such a handicap! Does the traditional curse explain the solitariness of Nathaniel Hawthorne? The truth is that in youth he was not solitary; he was a healthy, vigorous, athletic chap, very fond of swimming, skating, and hunting, though for a short time he was oppressed with a serious lameness. The habits of solitude which grew upon him were not due to morbidity, shyness, overdelicate sensitiveness, or a native unconquerable

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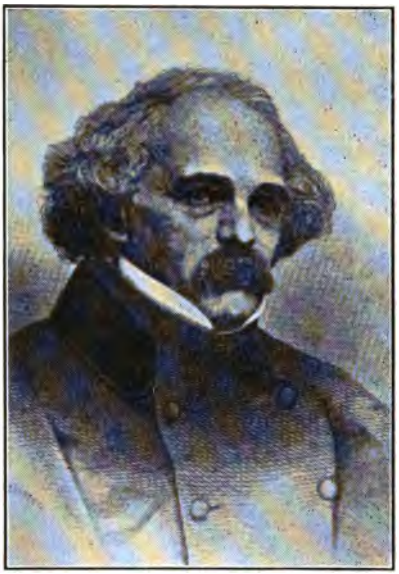
reserve, but, first, to his mother's abnormal seclusion after the death of her husband, and, second, to that inward pondering which leads to the lonely heights upon which alone the greatest geniuses have found it possible to do their best work. His *Scarlet Letter* proves him a genius. No other creative prose of such high rank has been written by an American; it is even doubtful whether any higher exists in English prose.



Nathaniel Hawthorne

33. Hawthorne's life was comparatively uneventful. He first lived at Salem, then with an uncle in the wild woods of Maine. He was a student at Bowdoin College. He served in the customs-house at Boston. He became a member of the Brook Farm Association. He lived at Lenox, at West Newton, and at Concord. He became in turn an officer in the customs-house at Salem, a United States consul at Liverpool, England, lived more than a year in Italy, and died in 1864 at Plymouth, New Hampshire, while on a trip to visit his intimate friend and schoolmate, ex-president Franklin Pierce.

34. Hawthorne's Short-stories. — The short-stories, or *tales*, as both he and Poe called them, of Hawthorne are his most popular works. First came the *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), among the best of which are "The Minister's Black Veil," "Wakefield," "A Rill from the Town Pump," "The

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Hollow of Three Hills," and "Dr. Heiddeger's Experiment." Then followed *Grandfather's Chair*, stories of New England history, written chiefly for children, and a second volume of *Twice-Told Tales*, including "Legends of the Province House," "The Ambitious Guest," "The White Old Maid," and "The Sister Years." In *Mosses from an Old Manse* the stories most read are famous indeed, and comprise "The Birthmark," "Rappaccini's Daughter," "Feathertop," "Drowne's Wooden Image," "Roger Malvin's Funeral," "The Old Apple Dealer," and "A Virtuoso's Collection." Four more volumes complete the list of the "tales": *A Wonderbook*, *Tanglewood Tales*, a *Second Wonderbook*, and *The Snow Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales*. The last of these contained "The Great Stone Face" and "Ethan Brand."

35. Quality of Hawthorne's Imagination. — The story element is not the most important feature of many of these short-stories. Rather, they bring to us a mood, whether their basis is a historical situation, an idea, or a contemporary spiritual condition. The tone of nearly all of them, while not oppressive, is more than a trifle fatalistic. Hawthorne once wrote, "An influence beyond our control lays its strong hand on everything we do and weaves the consequences into an iron tissue of necessity." This belief led him to take his characters into inevitably difficult situations, often to fix them there permanently. Lowell said of Hawthorne that he had "the rarest creative imagination of the century, the rarest in some ideal respects since Shakespeare." But it was only in his novels, not in his short-stories, that this constructive power of *imagination* was given full sway. His brief tales are the product chiefly of the fancy. They have not the imaginative force of pure fairy tales, nor do they spring from a keen imaginative reasoning following accurately the lines of real life. According to himself, these short-stories were built up with

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the idea that "fairy legend should be *combined* with the characters and manners of familiar life."

36. Possible Foreign Influences on Hawthorne. — Hawthorne looked for the vague and the indefinite in familiar life. He found much of it, and idealized it. A strange fact is that his stories, however much they may interest us, rarely move us. They lack driving force. But they are original. It has been claimed that Poe was influenced by the manner of the eighteenth-century German tale-tellers Tieck and the Hoffman Brothers, and by Coleridge and De Quincey. No one, however, has ever for a moment maintained that either Hawthorne's subject matter or his style was derived from any one else. First of all he discovered romance in Puritan New England. Then his clear, correct, illuminating, graceful style developed or grew without any apparent external influence. His style is inimitable; it is unique, not in driving energy but in the restrained force of precision. Hawthorne's genius was the most unalloyed among all American men of letters. It is of more unique distinction than that of Poe, for none has even attempted to imitate it.

Hawthorne said to Longfellow that he had had but few glimpses of real life and those as if through a peep-hole. But he affirmed that an author may present the truth of life under circumstances largely of his own choosing or creation. This right in his short-stories he fully exercised, enveloping his historical characters in legendary mist, mingling the marvelous as a delicate flavor with incidents associated with but casual types in actual life, and seeking always in the outcome of the story a strongly picturesque effect.

37. Hawthorne's Themes. — What shall be said of the stories one by one? They appeal to many and varied tastes. *Rappaccini's Daughter* is the richest and the most warmly glowing. In *The Great Stone Face* the author turned

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to Nature and found there eternal truth resident in the most striking out-of-door phenomenon of the Granite State of New Hampshire. In this story he revealed his boyhood's reverential, yet reasonable hero-worship for an actual man, Daniel Webster. *Ethan Brand* best reflects the influence of the allegorizing tendency of Hawthorne's mind, never free from the effect of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, to which he was devotedly attached. *The Celestial Railroad* more directly carries on the Bunyan tradition. *Dr. Heidegger's Experiment* represents most obviously its author's interest in supernatural problems. *A Virtuoso's Collection* is an excellent test, through the recognition of allusions, of one's acquaintance with literature of all times and races. *The Minister's Black Veil*, *The Birthmark*, *The Hollow of Three Hills*, closely link Hawthorne with Poe, for the shuddering effect of their terrors is the same, though not so closely pressed home as by Poe. These stories lack Poe's subtle ingenuity, but more than make up for that lack by the penetrating nature of their psychology. *The White Old Maid*, so fascinating to some readers, so repellent to others, is unexcelled in skillful manipulation of plot. *A Rill from the Town Pump* and *The Old Apple Dealer* are the most accurate of his few studies in actual local color. *The Snow Image* is, perhaps, the best of his stories for children.

And thus one could go on. While the general field of his studies is the human soul, the soul where the Actual and the Imaginary meet and blend, yet every story is distinct. They are the reflection of the quietest spirit in a most turbulent age. Hawthorne showed slight interest in the problems of the hour, which were hastening his country into the desolation of civil war. He did, however, write a campaign biography of Franklin Pierce. No man was ever more loyal to friends than Hawthorne, but his friends were few. He was interested almost exclusively in the problems of the soul; never excited in the midst of that interest (excepting

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in *The Scarlet Letter*, which he intended for a long short-story), always a cool observer, a delver into profound depths where one must be self-possessed or become irrational.

38. Hawthorne's Novels. — Hawthorne wrote only four truly great "novels" (which he called "Romances"): *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of Seven Gables*, *The Blithedale Romance*, and *The Marble Faun*. There were four other novels, of slight importance, *Fanshaw*, *Septimius Felton*, *The Dolliver Romance*, and *Dr. Grimshawe's Secret*.

39. ***The Scarlet Letter*** is a story with a theme as old as the Fall of Man, illustrating the truth that "an evil deed invests itself with the character of doom." This truth manifests itself in the book in connection with the endeavor to conceal a sin. The novel is Puritan in its content, though Hawthorne's attitude toward the facts was more scientific than theological. Still, the moral code of the Old Testament permeates the whole Puritan atmosphere as represented here. There is no Christ-like "Go and sin no more," — only the soul-torture during concealment of sin, the somberness never lightened until the end, when expiation comes through public confession of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale. But Hawthorne appears to take greater interest in the bafflement of old Roger Chillingworth's revenge than in the fact of confession. These are the three characters of the tragedy. The little girl, Pearl, is hardly a character at all, but a kind of elf-child, a beautiful and innocent symbol. Hawthorne is frugal with his characters, using scarcely enough commonplace ones to make a relieving background for those that are extraordinary.

The Scarlet Letter is the only book which Hawthorne wrote under stress of great emotion. It is a series of moods, each character representing a different mood. In it the author reveals rare artistry, strongly and deeply colored by the power of pictorial imagination. Among his masterworks it

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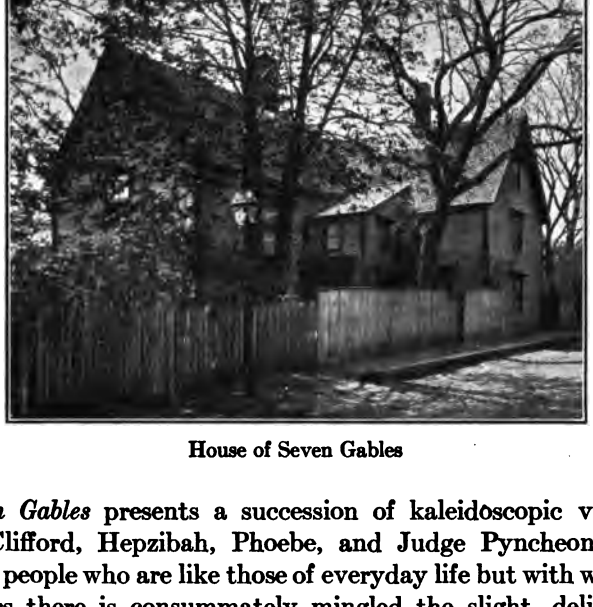
is the grand piece. Though written at white heat, its germ had lain in his mind for twenty years or more, in three sentences of the brief tale of "Endicott and the Cross." There are few books which represent a more "piercing, passionless vision of the movements of passion" than this study of souls and of the spiritual laws of the universe which control all souls, whether they are living the life of natural or of morbid thought and impulse.

40. ***The House of Seven Gables.*** — *The Scarlet Letter* is a weaving together of a group of moods; *The House of*



House of Seven Gables

Seven Gables presents a succession of kaleidoscopic views. In Clifford, Hepzibah, Phoebe, and Judge Pyncheon, we have people who are like those of everyday life but with whose affairs there is consummately mingled the slight, delicate, evanescent flavor of the marvelous, — Hawthorne's idea of the romantic. *The House of Seven Gables* was Hawthorne's

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favorite among his books. He thought it much superior to *The Scarlet Letter*. It is not so considered in critical opinion, yet appears to-day to be more read, owing no doubt to its frequent emphasis in the public schools of America. Unlike *The Scarlet Letter*, the setting is not in old Puritan days; but like it, the Puritan influence dominates throughout, for the crime and mysteries of a ghostly wizard of old affect each important step in the lives of all the characters. And we feel that Hawthorne the wizard sees all that these people do, searches their hearts, and knows them down to the last fold of their souls. If his short-stories are the product of *fanciful* analysis, these novels spring from a most self-poised, and yet deeply interested, *imaginative* analysis. Only a great imagination could see and set forth so clearly the momentous consequences of the smallest act, right or wrong.

41. The Brook Farm Community. — The scene of the first novel was Boston, of the second Salem, — "bleak, hard, scriptural Salem," — that of the third, *The Blithedale Romance*, a pleasant two-hundred-acre farm at West Roxbury, ten miles from Boston. There in April of 1841 a group of enthusiastic idealists (among them three members of the Ripley family, Charles A. Dana, the famous editor of the New York *Sun*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne) took up their residence in an association known as the Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education. The aim of this association (or community, though it was far from "socialistic," — quite the opposite, in point of actual fact) was to be rich in "leisure to live in all the faculties of the soul." Really, its members were in search of what most of them already had, namely, an abundance of spiritual health. It was the little bit they lacked of such health that led them to try to do what none of them was fitted to do, — to live with other people of such extraordinary ideas and unusual temperaments. These folk were visited by Margaret Fuller, by

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Emerson, Bronson Alcott, George William Curtis, W. H. Channing, and many others of the New England and New York literati. Emerson could hardly see the point to so much farming, and evening merry-making, and so little other productive work. He said, "The writer shall not dig. To be sure, he may work in the garden, but his stay there must be measured, not by the needs of the garden, but of the study. . . . When the terrestrial corn, beets, and tomatoes flourish, the celestial archetypes do not. . . ." The Rev. Mr. Ripley, the founder of the Institute, said, "We worship only reality, we are striving to establish a mode of life which shall combine the enchantments of poetry with the facts of daily experience." That sentence, especially after the comma, exactly expressed Hawthorne's views; but it was not long before Hawthorne felt that there was too much reality in the scheme, threw down his hoe, and left for good and all, saying, "The yeoman and the scholar are two distinct individuals, and can never be melted or welded into one substance."

42. ***The Blithedale Romance.*** — The best result of this zealous undertaking was Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*, a Utopian story of the Brook Farm Community, the nearest to real human life of any of his novels. Hawthorne found, for once, Romance in human beings as they are. Some of the Brook Farmers resented the book a little, complaining that it contained some ugly pictures of the experiment, and that it too frankly described the experimenters as knowing next to nothing about the bread-and-butter aspects of life. The book did handle, without gloves, the Quixotic features of the work of the Institute and farm. Among its chief personages are Hollingsworth and Zenobia. Hollingsworth, a character, however, unlike any at Brook Farm, is almost as repugnant to us as Roger Chillingworth in *The Scarlet Letter*. And though Zenobia is physically more beautiful, more magnificent, than Margaret Fuller, who was fre-

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quently a visitor, yet Miss Fuller's harsher characteristics are exaggerated into caricature when seen as Zenobia's.

Hawthorne was as shrewd as Emerson in his observations upon the experiment at Brook Farm and upon the people enamored of it. He proves a proposition in this book, as surely as one has ever been proved in a work of fiction; the proposition that right exaggerated may turn to wrong. It is a demonstration of the truth contained in a sentence near the end of the ethereal story of *The Snow Image*, a story totally unlike this dismally humorous book, — "It behooves men, and especially men of benevolence, to consider well what they are about, and, before acting on their philanthropic purposes, to be quite sure that they comprehend the nature and all the relations of the business in hand."

Hawthorne as a boy once wrote to his mother, "How proud you would be to see my books praised by the reviewers as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull." An eminent Scotch reviewer wrote of the next to the last chapter of *The Blithedale Romance*, "It is a fit close to the wreck of idealisms and the holocaust of aspirations, that leaves us with a deeper sense of the mockery of life, of utter hopelessness, than any other English work of fiction, excepting perhaps *Middlemarch*;" and of the finding of Zenobia's body as told in Hawthorne's book he said that it is "the most ghastly description in literature." Hawthorne's people in this volume are as lifelike as those created by the great realist who wrote *Middlemarch*. Their conversation is natural, for their author had heard it, or had heard talk precisely like it. Here for once, at least, the American romancer is openly a critic of life and humanity.

43. ***The Marble Faun*** in its details was the result of Hawthorne's residence in Italy; but its general idea was the result of his continual brooding over the mystery of human sin. The book is the story of three young friends in Italy, a young man and a young woman who were Ameri-

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cans and a second young woman, Miriam, whose nationality, though her last name is German, is not definitely revealed. The incidents center around the relationships of these young people with a fourth youth, an Italian count named Donatello, who resembles the Faun of Praxiteles. Readers have been much puzzled over the identity of Miriam and her history before she appeared in its pages, and have even puzzled over Donatello's ears. Those things were secondary to Hawthorne. His problem was to show the gradual growth of a thinking spirit, the intellectual awakening of Donatello after he had committed a crime, this Donatello who before the crime had been little more than a beautiful animal in human shape. *The Marble Faun* is a study in the outworking of Destiny after the fall of man; ultimately, as often happens, the fall was upward, because the intellectual and moral conscience had been awakened.

The Marble Faun, if one considers only the development of plot through multiplicity of details, reveals greater skill than the other Hawthorne novels. The handling of the lesser details is not so effective. Hawthorne was perplexed with Italy; he did not like the country. The semi-pagan art of her cities made him ill at ease; therefore in the description of the environment of his characters in this novel he proceeds hesitatingly; as some one has said, he stammers charmingly. Nevertheless, *The Marble Faun* has become one of the books which, like Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, every tourist going to Italy thinks he must read, not as a guide book, but as an inspiration, a guide to the mind, not to the feet.

44. Hawthorne's Place in American Letters. — As mere artist in literature, Hawthorne was not superior to Irving, but as genius in literature he is the top and crown of all we have had in America. It is almost impossible to speak of him excepting in superlative terms. He was "one of the

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greatest modern masters of English prose," says a mature and usually restrained American essayist. "He is unique among American authors in his ability to throw a glamour over the past and to become the spokesman of vanished generations," writes one historian of our literature.

And so one might go on, finding that in both popular and critical appreciation Hawthorne will for many years attract and interest and arouse the reverence of the young and charm the thoughtfully mature. Even his appearance indicated his unusual character. An old gipsy woman once meeting the youth in the woods, exclaimed, "Are you a man or an angel?" And in Hawthorne's later years William Dean Howells said of him, "His look was different from that of any picture of him that I have seen." His character and his books stand alone; he neither imitated nor can be imitated.

Writers of Verse

45. Some Minor Poets. — From 1837 to 1861 was not a fruitful period in good poetry. Poe, Holmes, and Bryant were writing, Poe ably and Holmes cleverly. The work of Poe, we have considered; that of Holmes will be presented in connection with his work in prose. Bryant also must receive special consideration. Three minor poets, Josiah Gilbert Holland, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, and Bayard Taylor, touched the popular heart in many verses. One of Taylor's poems is destined long to be sung as a stirring love-lyric, and one of Mrs. Howe's as a national hymn of great power and beauty. Then there were the greater American poets, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and Bryant, whose poetic careers began in those days "before the war," as they used to be called until the World War shifted all former perspective. Bryant was in his vigor as a journalist, as he continued to be for many years after the Civil War; but most of his verses were written even earlier than 1837, and a few of the best later than 1861.

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46. J. G. Holland began active life as a physician, in New England, and later became editor of *Scribner's Monthly* magazine. He wrote a few novels, some wholesome essays in letter form, and a number of long poems which, in his day, caused him to be greatly admired. His verse was largely in praise of domestic virtues. Two poems are still read, — *Bitter Sweet*, and *The Mistress of the Manse*. *Bitter Sweet* (1858) achieved the wider reputation of the two, and is perhaps the better in poetic cadences and in arrangement.

47. The Battle Hymn of the Republic. — The war between the states called forth many ballad poems, north and south, some with the swing and fire of the best patriotic lyrics. One we may be sure will not fail to endure as long as history makes record of the Civil War, — *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe. Mrs. Howe was the daughter of a New York banker and the wife of an able physician in public service at Boston, so that she was in practical touch with affairs of the day. She assisted in editing an anti-slavery paper called *The Commonwealth*, and wrote and lectured often upon topics of national interest and importance. In 1861 she had visited military camps near the city of Washington, and one day was moved by the marching of the enthusiastic youthful soldiers of the Union army, singing to the old negro catch which had been adopted for the words of *John Brown's Body*. The next morning she gave permanent form to her thought and feelings in the great *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Mrs. Howe published several books of verse, but no poem the equal of the *Battle Hymn*.

48. Bayard Taylor, a Pennsylvania Quaker, seems to have been born with a desire to "run away from home." At least, through boyhood he was consumed with the wish to travel. He constantly read books of travel and descriptions of foreign lands. In his mature years he put to "golden uses" his early feeling and his later information.

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He became a noted traveler, sailing first for England in 1844. Thence he went to the continent and spent six months of study at Frankfort, Germany. Austria and Italy claimed him next, where he lived sometimes upon as little as six cents a day, but apparently saw and heard everything that was worth while. *Views Afoot* resulted from these travels. It so much pleased the popular taste that within one year it was printed in six editions.

Bayard Taylor

Taylor became a lecturer, and a newspaper and magazine writer. The New York *Tribune* sent him to California and to Old Mexico. His restless spirit took him then to Egypt, Syria, European Turkey, India, China, and Japan; all this time he was writing charming letters to the *Tribune*. Again he went to Germany, and thence to Sweden, Denmark, and Lapland. One year later, he was in Greece. Still another tour in Europe and one to Iceland marked the close of his foreign roaming. All this travel gave him material for thousands of letters and for eleven books of travel.

Bayard Taylor wrote four novels. The *Story of Kennett* has been thought by some to be the most interesting of the four. Others have preferred *Hannah Thurston*, because of its greater breadth; it is an all-American study of manners and customs, its characters being drawn from Pennsylvania life.

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But Taylor aspired above all things to be a poet. He was a poet, though of secondary rank. He wrote too freely. The workmanship was good, some of it beautiful, especially in descriptive passages. Taylor saw beauty everywhere; he was thoughtful and he was a good workman. But he did not give his imaginative conceptions time to germinate, bud, flower, and bear fruitage in poetry of high order. He published several books of poems. Critical approval will, no doubt, be longest accorded to the poetic work of his later years, the long poems called *The Masque of the Gods*, and *Lars, a pastoral of Norway*. Yet it is the "sunlit pictures" of his *Poems of the Orient* which have brought him the more popular approval. "A Bedouin's Love-Song" is known everywhere; and "The Song of the Camp" touches the heart of every one who reads it.

William Cullen Bryant (1794–1878)

49. William Cullen Bryant, lawyer, traveler, orator, journalist, and poet, was born at Cummington, Massachusetts, in 1794. As a child, he was almost an intellectual prodigy. His father, a learned and cultured physician, encouraged and trained his son's aptitude for verse, so that by ten years of age the boy was writing poetry worthy of publication. At fourteen his *The Embargo* attacked in satirical verse President Jefferson's efforts to keep out of European wars, and by its keenness and force attracted wide attention.

Bryant attended Williams College for two years, then applied himself to the study of law in a private office. Admitted to the bar in 1815, he practiced law a year, and became town-clerk. He spent much time and talent in contributing to literary magazines in Boston and New York, and in editing the *New York Review*. In 1826 he became a member of the staff of the *New York Evening Post*. His close association with this paper continued for more than fifty years, until his death in 1878. The occasional associa-

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tion of such men as Bryant with journalism has made the American newspaper take and hold its high rank in the world.

By the time Bryant had become permanently occupied with the profession of journalism many of his best poems had been written, among them *Thanatopsis*, *Lines to a Water-Fowl*, *Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood*, *The Ages*, and *The Battle-field*. These poems possess elements of greatness. They lack vivacity, breadth, and strong personal expressiveness. They are subdued, autumnal, even prevailingly melancholy, and largely occupied with nature-worship, but they are smoothly written, and express ideas which concern all mankind; some passages are strikingly and singularly beautiful.

William Cullen Bryant

Bryant was not really a great poet, though he might have been if his father had not overtrained him in the formalism of life and thought and poetic workmanship of the eighteenth century, and if, Bryant himself said, as editor of a daily newspaper he had not been too much and too often forced "to scrawl strange words with a barbarous pen."

50. ***Thanatopsis*** is Bryant's best-known poem. Most of it was written during its author's seventeenth year, 1812, but was not published until after it had undergone revision,

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in 1817. In its present form it appeared in Bryant's twenty-seventh year, so that its noble quality is not such a mark of precocity as it is often asserted to be. However, *Thanatopsis* is one of the noblest poems in blank verse. Lines such as these have not often been surpassed, —

> So live that when thy summons comes to join
> The innumerable caravan that moves
> To the mysterious realm where each shall take
> His chamber in the silent halls of death,
> Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
> Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
> By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
> Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Few passages have been more often quoted in times of stress than those of the stanza from *The Battle-field:*

> Truth crushed to earth, shall rise again;
> The eternal years of God are hers;
> But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
> And dies among his worshipers.

Bryant did not write so much verse as Longfellow, Lowell, or Whittier, nor has his verse had so great influence as that of Emerson. His efforts during the earlier years of the century were not equaled by his work between 1837 and 1861. The inspiration which had resulted in *Thanatopsis* never came upon him again in full vigor. Not that his imagination was dead or even sleeping, for he continued frequently to write poetry, and editions of his former work, with some additions, appeared every few years. Among these additions there was no one great poem. Bryant was too much of a public man, it would seem, to become a prolific or a great poet. Drama and prose fiction require that their author shall dwell much among men and mingle freely in their affairs, but poetry is the result largely of contemplation and solitude. Still this editor-in-chief of a New

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York newspaper from 1828 to 1878 and popular orator on many public occasions, when bringing out a volume of poems in 1864, thirty in number, included twenty-seven new ones among the thirty, and one of them was the lovely *Little People of the Snow*. Furthermore, during the years 1866 to 1870 Bryant accomplished the translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, notable in simplicity and faithfulness to the meaning of the original Greek, a work of noble scholarship. All of his work Bryant weighed and revised with painstaking care. "His manuscript, as well as his proofs, were commonly so disfigured by corrections as to be read with difficulty even by those familiar with his script."

Bryant's loyalty, patriotism, and distinguished public service so endeared him to the entire country that his death in 1878 was looked upon as a national calamity.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–1894)

51. Oliver Wendell Holmes. — Five volumes of essays, all of which attracted popular approval, came from the pen of Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Boston physician, professor, wit, and poet. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, *The Poet at the Breakfast Table*, *Over the Teacups*, and *Pages from an Old Volume of Life*. The Breakfast Table series alone to-day enjoys a large reading public, although in this series *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* is seldom asked for at library desks. *The Autocrat* and *The Professor* are equally witty, the latter less brilliant. The "Autocrat" is Holmes himself. This book is personal, gayer than *The Professor*, more youthful in spirit, more alert. The style of both, however, is easy, flexible, finished in details; but if one regards the books as wholes he finds neither of them to be systematically constructed.

52. Holmes's Interests. — Holmes was interested most of all in matter-of-fact things close about him, and in old universal truths. Of the large public movements of the

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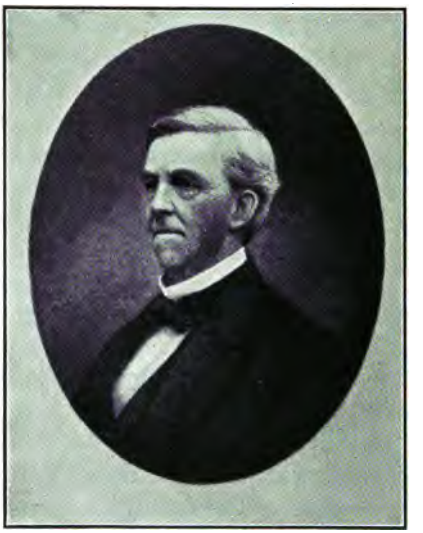
time in his own country, these books reveal almost no knowledge. The democratic tendencies of his day, which moved even the calm Emerson and stirred Lowell and Whittier to the depths, were of least interest to the Autocrat and the Professor, though Holmes in the dark days of 1863 did deliver an oration to citizens of Boston which insisted that the war must go on to the very end, even if that end were to be the total destruction of the American people and their civilization. This oration and his early verses upon *Old Ironsides* were the strongest utterances of Holmes upon any other things than the facts of science (he was a physician and a professor of Anatomy). Hence Holmes has had little influence upon the life of the nation, except the influence exerted by good cheer. Nor has he had any especially important influence upon literature. No one has successfully followed in his footsteps in whimsical wisdom.



Oliver Wendell Holmes

53. Holmes's Literary Kinships. — If Holmes was influenced by earlier men of letters, it was not by the romantic poets nor by the nature-lovers among fiction writers, but only by such men as Alexander Pope among the poets, and Laurence Sterne among the prose fiction writers. Holmes thought with Pope that the proper study of mankind is man. Holmes spoke of the country as the unpaved districts,

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and of rural folk as those who dwell by the unsalted streams. Boston was the home of the mind as well as of the body of Oliver Wendell Holmes. But he had the all-American independence of mind, the tendency to a humorous view of even the soberest situations, and the interest in concrete and isolated facts which distinguish Americans from men of other nationalities. Holmes was a master of sentiment and a master of pathos; a master also of drollery. He was skilful in sketching character, depicting himself in the Autocrat, in the Professor, and in the Poet, portraying himself as he would have been if he had had as little culture as "the young man whom they call John," a witty American but a crude one; and depicting also loquacious women "drifting upon their vocabularies as upon a shoreless ocean."

As much as the transcendentalists of Concord, Holmes rebelled against the Puritan atmosphere; not against its thought so much as against the gloom of its spirit. Holmes found the world a good thing to be amused with, and he has amused a goodly portion of the world of human society, at which he gracefully, zestfully, and animatedly laughed.

54. The Poetry of Holmes. — Though not a great poet, Holmes was the most delightfully urbane and entertaining gentleman in the America of his day, a writer of excellent, occasionally exquisite, "familiar verse." Every American schoolboy has declaimed *Old Ironsides*, with its stirring, ironical

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!

written by Holmes when he was twenty-one. Shortly afterward *The Last Leaf* was written, by many considered his best poem. Holmes's favorite was *The Chambered Nautilus*, which, with many other poems, was included in his prose masterpiece, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*. We shall here quote only *The Last Leaf:*

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I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan.
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmama has said, —
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago, —
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

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I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer.

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

Some readers have held certain prose passages in Holmes's *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* to be better poetry than any of his verse. The following passage lacks little but metre to make the most exacting of old-fashioned critics call it poetry:

The sea remembers nothing. It is feline. It licks your feet; its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you, for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened. The mountains give their lost children berries and water; the sea mocks their thirst and lets them die. The mountains have a grand, stupid, lovable tranquillity; the sea has a fascinating, treacherous intelligence. The mountains lie about like huge ruminants, their broad backs awful to look upon but safe to handle. The sea smooths its silver scales until you can see their joints, but their shining is that of a snake's belly, after all. In deeper suggestiveness I find as great a difference. The sea drowns out humanity and time; it has no sympathy with either; for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song for ever and ever.

Holmes, as we have found, wrote verse that has given him lasting fame. The *Old Ironsides*, written during his college days, and *The Last Leaf*, published in 1836, have proved that for us, but his memory will be treasured also by virtue of several maturer poems, some humorous, others

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serious. *The Deacon's Masterpiece: or, the Wonderful One-Hoss-Shay* is both humorous and serious. It has never failed to amuse its readers. And no one familiar with some of Holmes's pet aversions ever failed to see that its very serious purpose was to satirize the passing of the old-fashioned logical theology of old New England, which, like the famous One-Hoss Shay and the modern flying machine, must have been so made that every part could bear its burden of strain as long as every other part:

> You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
> How it went to pieces all at once, —
> All at once and nothing first, —
> Just as bubbles do when they burst.

Holmes's *Hymn of Trust*, *A Sun-Day Hymn*, and *The Chambered Nautilus* are three better poems than that humorous masterpiece. *A Sun-Day Hymn* is sung in almost every church in Christendom. Its tone is elevated; to read it is to be inspired and exalted. From the first phrase to the end its power is sustained. One stanza will recall the poem:

> Lord of all being! throned afar,
> Thy glory flames from sun and star;
> Center and soul of every sphere,
> Yet to each loving heart how near!

The Chambered Nautilus is the most quoted and the best among his serious verses. Its favored lines are:

> Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
> As the swift seasons roll!
> Leave thy low-vaulted past!
> Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
> Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
> Till thou at length art free,
> Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

"There is a little plant called *Reverence* in the corner of my Soul's garden, which I love to have watered about once

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a week," said Holmes, when speaking of his church-going habits. And it is the poems in which he reflected the religious spirit of the American people, not his society verse, nor any of the anniversary poems read year after year, twenty-eight years without a break, at the reunions of the Harvard class of 1829, that will keep Holmes upon the sacred hill of poetry. Yet in no one of his poems does his work stand as high in the literature of poetry as *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* stands in the literature of prose.

55. Holmes as Novelist. — Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote three novels, *Elsie Venner*, *The Guardian Angel*, and *A Mortal Antipathy*. The first dates from the beginning of the Civil War, 1861; the second saw the light in 1867; the third in 1885, when its author was nearly eighty years of age. They are "modern," in that they deal with the borderland between physiology and psychology. They belong to the class of purpose novels, the author desiring to reveal the workings of heredity, or something like it, in human life. If Holmes had written nothing but these novels, he would soon be forgotten. It is his excellence as an essayist and a poet that sheds luster upon his efforts as a novelist.

56. The Four Greatest New England Poets. — Most of the best work of the greater New England poets, Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, and Whittier, was accomplished before 1861. The poetry of Lowell and of Whittier was full of the clash of ideas which resulted in the conflict of arms. Yet Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn," Lowell's second series of *The Biglow Papers*, his "Commemoration Ode," and "The Cathedral," and Whittier's "Eternal Goodness," "Snow-bound," and "The Brown Dwarf of Rügen" belong to the next period. These four men were poets, — not mere verse-makers, nor rhymesters. They were endowed with largeness of spirit, freedom, insight, benignity, a sense for beautiful diction, a knowledge of the suggestive power of words, — men of imaginative fullness, and men who worked hard upon their

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material with the powers with which they were gifted. One of the editors of the *Dial*, then a Cambridge literary magazine, said, in 1840, "The American poet, the American thinker, is yet to come." And Francis H. Underwood, one of the first two editors of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the other being Lowell, said in 1853, "There are not above six men in America (known to me) to whom I would pay *anything* for poetry." The first statement could not have been made after Longfellow, Emerson, Lowell, and Whittier had published *Evangeline*, *The Rhodora*, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, and *Kossuth*, all within less than ten years after the statement had been made. But the second statement remained true in its suggestion long after it was uttered. There were numberless writers of verse, and writers of rhymes not worthy to be called verse, but few poets. Let us look at one of the poets.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)

57. The Concord Philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote the following lines as early as 1831, —

The gods talk in the breath of the woods,
    They talk in the shaken pine,
And fill the long reach of the old seashore
    With dialogue divine;
And the poet who overhears
    Some random words they say
Is the fated man of men
    Whom the ages must obey.

As early as that date, when Emerson was only twenty-eight years old, he was showing signs of becoming a poet whose teachings ages must obey. But he had some years of discipline before him as a prose writer before he achieved greatness with his poetry. In fact, little of his prose before 1837 was of such quality as to merit high esteem, with the exception of the small book entitled *Nature*.

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A word first, however, about the rather uneventful life of this "Greek head on Yankee shoulders," as Lowell called Emerson. He was the son of William Emerson, a pastor of the Second Church of Boston, and was born in 1803. In 1811 his father died, leaving Ralph Waldo's mother in straitened circumstances with a family of five little boys. By frugal living, and with the inspiring aid of an aunt, Mary Emerson, four of these sons, including Ralph, received a college education. It was this aunt, too, who instilled into the mind of Emerson a profound love for nature and a lofty cast of thought.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Emerson entered Harvard College at the age of fifteen, and was graduated in 1821. He then taught school, in various places, and soon began studying at the Divinity School in Cambridge. Ill health interrupted his preparation for the ministry. The winter of 1826 he spent in Florida. Returning, he again studied theology, and preached here and there as opportunity offered. Finally, in 1829, he was ordained as associate pastor of the Second, or Old North, Church in Boston, and a short time after assumed full duty as pastor of this church. However, lack of adherence to the theological creed accepted by his parishioners, and shyness in making pastoral visits, led him in 1832 to give up the active ministry. About this time his first wife died, and soon afterward Emerson sailed for Europe, visiting Malta,

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Sicily, Italy, France, England, and Scotland. In the last named country began his life-long friendship with Thomas Carlyle.

In 1833 Emerson returned to Boston, and in the following year moved to Concord, where for the rest of his life, almost fifty-eight years, this urbane and scholarly gentleman lived and wrote verse and prose, and made his living, beyond what was supplied by the inheritance which came to him from the family of his first wife, by small farming and by frequent lecture engagements throughout the country. Emerson was married a second time in 1835. He made a second trip to Europe in 1847, traveling in England and in France. This trip was made in response to an invitation to lecture in England.

58. ***Nature,*** his first book, published anonymously in 1836, was a prose essay in eight brief parts. Another essay with the same title was published in 1844. Though more facile in style and somewhat richer in the details of life and thought with which men are familiar, the later essay is not comparable with the first in its depth of thought and wealth of stimulating intellectual suggestions. The *Nature* of 1836 is a great book. It deals with nature in its ordinary uses to man, in its beauty, in its effect upon the speech of man, in its discipline of the intellect of man. It considers nature from the idealistic point of view, teaching that "the happiest man is he who learns from nature the lesson of worship." It is a highly imaginative piece of writing, illustrating excellently its own definition of the imagination as "the use which the reason makes of the material world." The whole is a poetic product, even if in prose; it believes with Plato that poetry rather than history comes nearer to vital truth. It teaches that if we see any ruin or blank when we look at nature, the defective thing is in our own eye. The conclusion is that nature is not fixed, but fluid, that spirit alters, molds, and even makes nature; and that you should,

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therefore, after your mind is filled with the divine spirit, build your own world.

59. The Transcendentalists. — In 1836 George Ripley of Boston founded a club, the purpose of which was the discussion of topics of religion and philosophy, such as Law, Truth, Individuality, and the Personality of God. The organization was called The Transcendental Club. Ripley in 1840 defined Transcendentalism as a "belief in an order of truth which transcends the sphere of the external senses." Thus the leading idea of this club was the supremacy of mind over matter, — a very old idea. Another important idea of the club was that religion does not depend upon acceptance of a traditional belief, but that only he is religious who has in his own soul a witness of God. This Transcendental movement was a natural growth away from the worn-out Puritan theology; though the theology was dying hard, for many an otherwise liberal thinker still clung to most of the orthodox beliefs. Among these was William Ellery Channing, who, as one of the founders of American Unitarianism, influenced many more people than did Emerson in his life-time from his study and his lecture-platform. The Transcendentalists, or, as Emerson preferred, Idealists, included among their number Ripley, Emerson, Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, W. H. Channing (nephew of W. E.), Bronson Alcott, and Theodore Parker. Emerson, "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit," was the most advanced thinker of the group.

60. Emerson's Share in Transcendentalism. — Emerson's first book, *Nature*, made a most substantial as well as a most imaginative appeal for the transcendental beliefs. It was an argument for the independence and yet the unity of man, for the dignity and self-sufficingness of the individual. But in 1837 Emerson inaugurated the mid-century period with his very famous Phi Beta Kappa address upon *The American Scholar*, delivered at Harvard College. This

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address was characterized by many as the declaration of American intellectual independence, just as Jefferson's document in 1776 had been our declaration of political independence. About a year later Emerson delivered another speech at Cambridge, this time before the Divinity School. This second address aroused, as Emerson wrote to Carlyle, a "storm in a washbowl." In the first speech Emerson had contended that man, to be free, must cut himself loose from the past. A natural conclusion was drawn from this in the second lecture, to the effect that the free man in religion is he who does not depend upon tradition or even history for his knowledge of God and divine things, but finds God within himself.

Although the outward life lived by Emerson, and by the other "idealists" of Boston and Concord, seems very humble, very limited and meager, to us of the twentieth century, excepting their life during the excitement of Civil War days and of the days immediately preceding them, yet such men as Emerson lived the most intense of lives within their own souls. There was within the spirits of these men the least of that which is narrowing and cramping. Emerson in particular, though feeling deeply, was most gently tolerant of the narrowness of others, largely because he was always strongly optimistic of the final noble outcome of human affairs. When others became angrily intolerant, he would ask, "Why so hot, my little man?" It was this attitude of gently ironic tolerance which made him a sort of balance-wheel for the enthusiastic and purposeful youth of his day, incited, as they constantly were, by the trend of public affairs, to hasty judgment and inconsiderate action. Emerson's thought belongs to all time. He borrowed much from older thinkers and writers, going back to the Greek philosopher Plato for the most fundamental of his conceptions. Yet he contributed to the idealistic movement in man's history much more than he borrowed.

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61. Emerson's Essays. — Emerson delivered many annual courses of lectures in Boston and elsewhere, and these lectures reappeared as essays, in several volumes. The best essays are in the two series of 1841 and 1844. In these lecture-essays, as in his addresses upon *The American Scholar* and the Divinity School address, he developed the ideas first expressed in the 1836 volume on *Nature*. Much of worldly-wise experience and Yankee shrewdness are in these later essays, and less of the poetical rhapsodizing of *Nature*. None of his essays contains more practical wisdom than those on "Self-reliance," "Compensation," and "Manners." And no other is so completely an explanation of his philosophy as the essay on "The Over-soul." By the Over-soul Emerson simply meant a person's higher self, the self which he shares with God, the self which intellectually we call genius, morally we call virtue, and emotionally we call love. Because men share in the Infinite, he says, therefore they should be self-reliant. Because all men share in the life of God, therefore all men are united. Hence it follows that men are both individuals and members of a companionable social community.

In 1850 Emerson published a book called *Representative Men*, not unlike Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-worship* in its ideas. In 1847 and 1848 Emerson had traveled in England, and this led in 1856 to the publication of a book called *English Traits*. Both these books for their foundational ideas go back to his earliest volume, *Nature*. These and all the others are full of far-reaching suggestions. They lack passion, but they are full of beauty and wisdom; they are nearly always luminous, often brilliant, surprising by their unexpected turns of thought, surprising all the more because the thought when expressed appears to be so very natural. Emerson taught everywhere and all the time that "the world is saturated with deity and with law."

The essays of Emerson began as jottings, many of them

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unrelated to each other, in his note-books. Then these jottings were put together into the form of lectures. They were then revised, as we have said, into essays. They are far from perfect in form, though not because their author did not think sufficiently over them. Some of his single sentences, which read as if they were struck out suddenly and at white-heat, were the result of a fortnight's meditation. This accounts for their brilliancy and their good-sense. Nearly every word of his stands for deliberate thought in its selection. But because each thought and each word were pondered over so long and so deliberately, and set down at such intervals of time apart, there often seems to be a lack of logical connection between his statements. He said of his writing that it consisted of "paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." Yet his statements in each essay do have a logical thread connecting them, for there is in each part of the essays some one fundamental thought. In fact, a few fundamental thoughts make his essays all akin. They are attractive to most thoughtful readers, for they are permeated with his perception of Beauty, and with him it is "a beauty that never enfeebles, but always braces and cheers."

62. Emerson's Poetry. — With the exception of the *Concord Hymn*, 1836, we have from Emerson before 1837 little but fragments. Many of these fragments were verses *about* poetry, and were altered and added to from time to time. Among these in its final form stands the ever beautiful and optimistic

> Let me go where'er I will
> I hear a sky-born music still:
> It sounds from all things old,
> It sounds from all things young;
> From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
> Peals out a cheerful song.
> It is not only in the rose,
> It is not only in the bird,

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Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the song of woman heard,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There alway, alway something sings.

'Tis not in the high stars alone,
Nor in the cups of budding flowers,
Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers, —
But in the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings.

The brief but beautiful *Snow-storm* beginning,

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow,

was written in 1834. The poem proceeds with wonderful realism, its remaining twenty-six lines furnishing a vividly perfect picture far surpassing pages of similar description in Cowper and Whittier.

It is the *Concord Hymn*, sung at the completion of the battle monument, April 19, 1836, which, by virtue of its historical associations, attaches itself most closely to the popular heart. The first stanza has always thrilled the American breast, —

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

And the last one is adapted as finely to soothe, —

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

63. Emerson and Wordsworth. — Emerson possessed a wide vision of the human mind, and of life generally. Was he original in his presentation of that vision? Yes, though

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his thought was kindred to that of Wordsworth, who, best of any poet in all time, had described and interpreted the nature of this universe which interested Emerson so vitally. In nature, Wordsworth found a universal spirit, or, to put the matter another way, Wordsworth's way, all nature is "deeply interfused" with spiritual life. Especially did the English poet thus interpret nature in the lofty masterpiece on *Tintern Abbey*. Emerson, in an early poem, "Good-bye, proud World," reflected the same thought about the spiritual life of nature, —

> I laugh at the lure and pride of man,
> At the sophist schools and the learned clan;
> For what are they all, in their high conceit,
> When man in the bush with God may meet.

His prose volume on *Nature* (1836) contained this same genuine insight into and interpretation of nature, — nature, of which man is part. In fact, more than with Holmes, Emerson's greatest poetic achievements have been in his prose essays. Those who knew Emerson in person, found in his mental make-up a certain stiffness which made it difficult for him to sing or chant the spiritual ideals which flooded his mind, however vividly and warmly they were perceived and felt. Usually, to us, he seems to have been too economical in his use of words for the melting flow of musical verse. He could and did, at times, become rapturous, and the inspired numbers came. Through all of his verse, as well as through his prose essays, runs the Wordsworthian doctrine that universal nature is constantly repeating one note, a divine note. Everywhere, as Emerson worded it, may be "caught the footsteps of the SAME." However, Emerson was not an imitator in expressing this idea. Wordsworth *saw* and *heard* revelations of divine spirit immanent in the life of nature; but Emerson followed more keenly the intellectual processes and the *implications*

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of the presence of that spirit. The divine spirit in its active operations in the forming of nature attracted and held the attention of Emerson more than of Wordsworth. In his *Wood-notes* the New England poet defines the personality of God, the Spirit who is in all-nature, when he flings out the powerful line —

And Conscious Law is King of Kings.

In that thought is Emerson's *original* contribution to the interpretation of nature. In *The Problem*, for a long time the most quoted of his poems, he wrote the wonderful lines which show that when man is creating anything he is the instrument of the Conscious Law which is the Universal Being:

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below, —
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew; —
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Emerson believed that all nature has wrought in its developing process up to man, and is still working on to a better manhood. In the poem entitled *Bacchus*, he wrote

And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man.

In *Monadnoc*, he points out the superiority of man to other things in nature:

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Monadnoc is a mountain strong,
Tall and good my kind among;
But well I know, no mountain can,
Zion or Meru, measure with man.

In the same poem, he insists that man is destined to progress:

The World-soul knows his own affair,
Forelooking, when he would prepare
For the next ages, men of mould
Well embodied, well ensouled,
. . . . . .
Of the same stuff, and so allayed,
As that whereof the sun is made,
And of the fibre, quick and strong,
Whose throbs are love, whose thrills are song.

Though Emerson felt deeply, he wrote, as a rule, with restraint. His intellect held his emotions in leash. Even when he wrote his *Threnody*, in memory of his son, he kept his emotions well in hand, as Milton, Tennyson, and Arnold when they turned to the writing of poems in memory of their dead. Emerson was more restrained than they. Yet how hopeful he is: —

What is excellent,
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain·
Heart's love will meet thee again.

Many of Emerson's briefer poems have been very popular. They are delightful, beyond reckoning in terms of critical praise, — such poems as *Each and All*, *The Rhodora*, *The Humble-Bee*, and *The Snow-storm*. Unforgettable lines are in these poems, thoughtful pictures that are as beautiful, and as heartening, too, as any to be found anywhere.

There were times when Emerson wrote inspired passages. Some were inspired in pictured thought, as in *Woodnotes*, —

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For Nature beats in perfect tune,
And rounds with rhyme her every rune,
Whether she work in land or sea,
Or hide underground her alchemy.
Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhyme the oar forsake.

In the *Concord Ode* of July 4, 1857, we find

He that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

Then, in *Freedom*,

Freedom's secret wilt thou know?
Counsel not with flesh and blood;
Loiter not for cloak or food;
Right thou feelest, rush to do.

A little poem called *Sacrifice* was a clarion call so long after his death as the World War. The entire poem consists of but four lines, —

Though love repine, and reason chafe,
There comes a voice without reply, —
'Tis man's perdition to be safe,
When for the truth he ought to die.

A complement to this poem is the quatrain from *Voluntaries*, —

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*.

These poems were written, with one or two exceptions, between 1837 and 1847. Little of Emerson's best poetry was written after the Civil War. He lived until 1882; but his great work was finished long before that. As the world

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grows older, and more thoughtful, his verse will be more read. In the meantime, those who have already learned to know and to love him will be content with their assurance that they may turn to him and easily find many stanzas which "rank with the loftiest utterances which have ever proceeded from the awakened heart and conscience and intellect of man." Even if he did help to destroy some traditions which old-fashioned people had deemed precious, yet he was, as Holmes said, "an iconoclast who took down our idols so gently that it seemed like an act of worship."

Like Bryant, Emerson was neither a fluent nor a prolific poet, as compared with many who have given even less of their life-time to literature alone. Most of his later poems came within the volume published in 1867 under the modest title of *May-day and Other Pieces*. "May-day" is Emerson's longest poem; but it is not very well ordered, illustrating its author's lack of power of sustained effort in verse. In this volume of *May-day and Other Pieces* were included the philosophical (and to some people, rather puzzling) "Brahma," the inspiring "Voluntaries," the wise and experienced reflections under the title of "Terminus," and "Days." The last named is one of Emerson's triumphant successes. It cannot be called a popular poem, but it will forever contain teaching for the thoughtful. It reads

> Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
> Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
> And marching single in an endless file,
> Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
> To each they offer gifts after his will,
> Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
> I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
> Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
> Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
> Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
> Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

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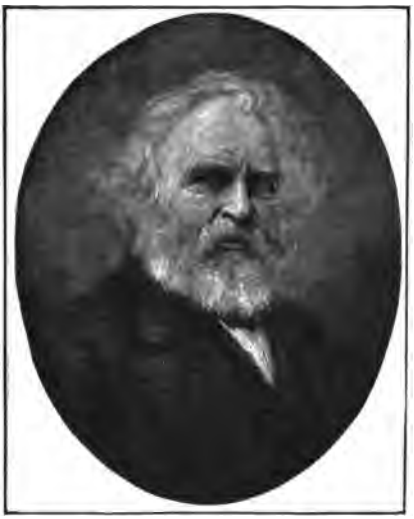
Emerson's verses are not merely "raw material for poetry," as has been asserted and repeated by many a hasty critic. The evidence that they are not is that they are constantly gaining a wider circle of appreciative and discriminating readers.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)

64. The People's Poet, Longfellow. — The life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow does not furnish a very thrilling narrative. A boy who goes to school and does practically nothing else; when he becomes a young man pursues the same course of going to school; and as a mature man continues to do the same thing as a teacher in the classroom often as much as six hours a day, can hardly be said to be living an exciting life. Such was the life of Longfellow. Born in Portland, Maine, February 27, 1807, the son of a distinguished lawyer, and descendant, through his mother, of John Alden and Priscilla Mullens, he went over the usual routine of the school training of a boy in a small city, though he showed an early fondness for books and a tendency toward verse-making. It was a city by the sea in which he lived, however, and many years later he wrote in fond recollection of



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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Sails of silk and ropes of sandal,
Such as gleam in ancient lore;
And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore.

Although his father and grandfather were graduates of Harvard, he was sent to Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Maine. Here he was a classmate of Hawthorne, and from this college he was graduated in 1825, delivering a Commencement Day "Oration" upon the subject of "Our Native Writers." As a reward for his excellent scholarship, shown especially in his translation of Horace, he was selected by the faculty of the college as Professor of Modern Languages, it being assumed that a sound Latinist could at least teach the languages derived in large part from the language of ancient Rome. To prepare the better for this position Longfellow went abroad, and from 1826 to 1829 studied modern languages in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany. He was a professor at Bowdoin for six years.

In 1831 he married Miss Mary Storer Potter of Portland. Four years later Harvard College elected him to the chair of modern languages, and he at once revisited Europe preparatory to taking up his work in the new environment. While they were abroad his wife died in the city of Rotterdam. In lines written later in his life and called *Footsteps of Angels*, he speaks of her, —

And with them, that being beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

From 1835 to 1854 he worked at Harvard, a methodical, orderly, but wide-awake, courteous, much-loved, and strongly inspiring teacher. In 1843 he married Miss Frances Appleton, who, in 1861, was burned to death in their home, the Craigie House, at Cambridge. Longfellow's generally serene and sunny-natured life was not without shadows, but

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those sorrows fitted him all the better to become the fireside poet of America. After the resignation of his professorship at Harvard, in 1854, he gave his time wholly to study and to the writing of verse and translations. In 1868 he went for a third time to Europe, touring about the Scottish Lakes, and visiting Italy once more. In 1882 he died, and was buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, mourned the whole world over.

65. Longfellow's Poetry. — Longfellow's chief books of verse were:

Voices of the Night	1839
Ballads, and Other Poems	1841
The Spanish Student	1843
The Belfry of Bruges, and Other Poems	1846
Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie	1847
The Seaside and the Fireside	1850
The Golden Legend	1851
The Song of Hiawatha	1855
The Courtship of Miles Standish	1858
Birds of Passage	1858–1863
Tales of a Wayside Inn	1863
Translation of *The Divine Comedy*, of Dante	1867–1870

There are more than a dozen titles of other small volumes, some of them containing several of his best-loved poems, such as *The Hanging of the Crane* (1874), but upon the poetry of books in this list his abiding reputation will rest.

The strength of the short poems in *Voices of the Night* is due to their simplicity and to their embodiment of popular sentiment. Their "peculiarly American tone," as the English reviewers of the time called it, the tone, that is, we Americans think, of hopefulness as against the pessimistic tone of much European literature of that day, made them welcome to all who were seeking for Americanism in literature. And the note of universal sympathy in such poems as "The Psalm of Life," "The Reaper and the Flowers,"

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"The Light of Stars," and "Footsteps of Angels," inspired and enlarged the lives of old and young.

The volume of *Ballads, and Other Poems* included the ever popular "Wreck of the Hesperus," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Rainy Day," and "Excelsior." They need only to be named to recall to almost every adult in the English-speaking world his piece-speaking days. "The Skeleton in Armor," though not so pleasing to all readers, is the most imaginative poem in this volume.

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Longfellow wrote several dramas, but his earliest one, *The Spanish Student*, if judged as a play, is his best. It is a lively and clever piece of work. Among his other dramas only *The Golden Legend* can be compared with it, and that not as dramatic achievement. Still *The Golden Legend* may be considered the better poem. It is a medieval romance put into dramatic form, and contains the choicest gleanings Longfellow made from his prolonged and intensive studies in Gothic mysticism. It is a versatile and brilliant working together of medieval rituals, chants, and wonder-tales.

In *The Belfry of Bruges, and Other Poems*, are contained, among others "The Bridge," "The Day is Done," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," "The Arrow and the Song," and those

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two peace poems, the application of whose ideas have been so sorely needed in our century, "The Arsenal at Springfield," and "The Occultation of Orion." The first of the peace poems utters the truth that

> Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
> Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
> Given to redeem the human mind from error,
> There were no need of arsenals and forts.

And in the second, the great angel voice trumpets forth

> Forevermore, forevermore,
> The reign of violence is o'er!

Longfellow's thoughtful, tender, humane spirit shows itself nowhere better than in *The Seaside and The Fireside*, including, with its dedication, twenty-one poems. "The Building of the Ship" is the most vigorous of the group; no poem is more fully representative of Longfellow's style than this energetic piece. "Resignation" also belongs to this volume; to those who sorrow, this is the sweetest of all his many poems.

A volume of popular poems selected from various authors was once published in Great Britain which contained more poems from the pen of Longfellow than from those of all the English-born poets. It is not strange. The ease and grace, the sincerity, the sympathetic understanding of the springs of human conduct, and the optimistic outlook for humanity have endeared Longfellow to all the world. It is his longer poems, though, that have been most appreciated. *Evangeline*, *The Song of Hiawatha*, *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, and *The Golden Legend*, — each in its own day was something new under the sun. To describe them is unnecessary. They have been read with delight for three-quarters of a century.

Evangeline Longfellow owed to Hawthorne, who told him the story, giving up the writing of it as a prose tale that

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Longfellow might write the poem. Longfellow at one time said, "I do not see why a successful book is not as great an event as a successful campaign." Some books are; *Hiawatha*, at least, will cause its author to be known as long as, and to be loved much longer than, any great military leader for his successful campaigns. By both these poems their author aroused much argument "about it and about" among the critics, because of his use of hexameter verse in *Evangeline* and of an old Finnish epic metre in *Hiawatha*. The public reads and enjoys; and, if it hears of the discussion, is grateful that an author can so please it and yet at the same time arouse important critical controversy. It is a compliment to the public that a man may excite the intellect of the scholar, even if to hostility, and yet entertain and satisfy the public's need.

Birds of Passage is not so excellent a group of poems as those in other volumes. Yet it would live if only for the last poem in the First Flight, entitled "Sandalphon," strongly suggestive of Poe in sound and measure; or if only for the first poem in the Second Flight, the charming "Children's Hour."

Tales of a Wayside Inn is a collection of stories purporting to be told in the parlor of a colonial hostelry in Sudbury town. The stories suffer in comparison with Chaucer's tales told by the pilgrims on the way to Canterbury. However, we are not forced to make the comparison, and the landlord's Tale of "Paul Revere's Ride," which is in spirited ballad form, is sufficient to redeem them all from the weariness which attends an attempt to read the Tales without selection. "The Saga of King Olaf," related in the fire-illumined room by the musician, is also vigorously done.

66. Longfellow's Characteristics. — Longfellow is unfailingly pictorial. The best artists of his day took pleasure in illustrating his poems, the illustrations by Edwin A. Abbey being especially apt to the text. It is not, however, Long-

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fellow's pictorial language, nor his musical verse, that makes the world-wide appeal, nor is it the fine charm of his story-telling power, so much as the humane spirit in which he expresses and interprets the elemental emotions of his fellow-men. This it is which makes him an artistic force in literature. His was a beautiful character, revealing itself at once in his appearance more felicitously than the appearance of most men can ever reveal their inner selves. To look at the picture of the mature Longfellow is a benediction. The Norwegian statesman and dramatist, Björnson, most fittingly called him "the white Mr. Longfellow."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow remained, until his death in 1882, the most popular poet upon the continent, if, indeed, he is still not our most popular poet. His best loved poems, excepting "Paul Revere's Ride" in *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863), *The Hanging of the Crane* (1874), and the little song called "The Happiest Land," were published before 1861. Yet much that was strong and noble, even if not popular, was accomplished during the later years of his life. His *Christus* is a series of dramatic works which he himself thought would be likely to be among the poems that in later years would be considered his best. But to handle the subject matter of these dramas, which was Christendom in its apostolic, its medieval, and its modern aspects, was too great a task for Longfellow; the very magnitude of it placed it beyond his powers. His late dramatic work was impressive. There are strong lines in the drama of *Judas Maccabeus*, and much thought in the drama of *Michael Angelo*.

67. Translation of the *Divine Comedy*. — The truly great work of Longfellow in his more mature years was the translation of the *Divine Comedy* from the Italian of Dante, done in 1867–1870. Longfellow also made many translations of lyrics from the French, the German, and the Spanish. He was a born translator, and did greater service than even

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Irving in revealing the old world to the new. His translation of Dante is still, if not the best of all translations of Dante, the best in verse.

Longfellow to the world at large represents the fine flower of expression in the garden of American letters. A man of excellent parentage, good schooling, living amid beautiful natural surroundings, possessing an instinct for what is valuable in sentiment and culture, and a talent for simple and clear expression, he was equipped for writing popular English verse and acceptable prose.

68. Longfellow's Prose. — Three prose works of importance stand to his credit: *Outre-Mer, or Sketches from Beyond Sea*, *Hyperion*, and *Kavanagh*. Only the first of these was published before the mid-century period; its date is 1835. *Outre-Mer* is a compilation of sketches first published in magazines. It brought to American minds the beauty of European scenery and the charm of European historical and literary associations. The sketches are in the form of tales, reveries, reminiscences, and pleasant and intelligent appreciations of European literatures, landscapes, and peoples. The book was eminently useful as an introduction to a history and culture which America had been inclined to neglect. It is still read by readers interested in the early attempts to associate America with the refinements and traditions which belong to the world as a whole.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892)

69. Our Most Representative Poet. — The most "natural born," to use a homely phrase, of all our poets was John Greenleaf Whittier. Thus far he has been the most nearly national, too. With him poetry was not so much a great art as it was a natural way of expressing his thoughts and feelings. There are many crudities, many rough and unready lines in his verse. He lacked the training of the schools, and he lived too busy a life to train himself in the

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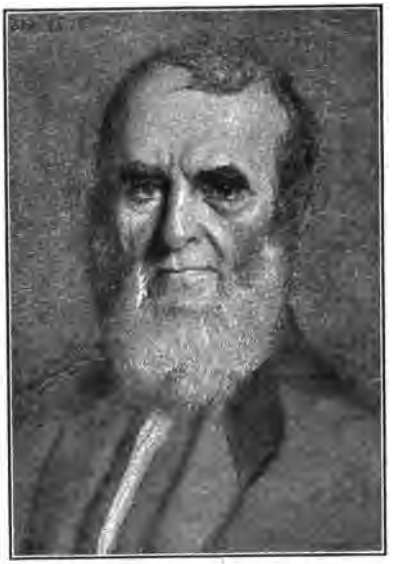
skilled workmanship of a great poet. But nature communed directly with him, the universal experiences of the human heart were common to him, and the sufferings of all who were wronged were a flame in his own heart. Of these things he spoke out. It was a great day in America during the time that he was writing, and he was the singer of the nobler aspects of that day. If he was not entirely national, since he did not represent in his song the spirit of all the people of America, yet he did sing the deeper things of the spirit of a strongly American group of those who made up the national life.



John G. Whittier

Whittier was a Huguenot by descent, a Quaker by birth and in belief; but all the suppressed fighting spirit of generations seems to have broken out in him. Hawthorne referred to him as the "fiery Quaker youth to whom the Muse has perversely assigned a battle trumpet." Lowell, in *A Fable for Critics*, describes him as

> Both singing and striking in front of the war,
> And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor.

He began life as a farmer boy, in the homestead which stood until a few years ago near Haverhill, Massachusetts, but soon found his way to the printing presses in neighboring cities, and there gave his energy to arousing to action

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the sturdy manhood of the northern countryside against the owning and exploiting of human life and labor in the form of slavery. He early became an admirer of William Lloyd Garrison, the "lion-hearted champion of freedom," who was editor of the Newburyport *Free Press*, and, later, of *The Liberator*. Whittier's contributions to the *Free Press* and other publications soon led him into the editorship of a paper at Boston, then of one at Haverhill, after that at Hartford, Connecticut, and still later at Philadelphia. He was a leading writer for other prominent journals, became secretary of The American Anti-Slavery Society, was mobbed at Plymouth, Boston, and Philadelphia, served as a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, and could have gone to Congress, but refused to run for the office.

It was natural that, living such a life as this, he should write chiefly from impulse, and seldom as a result of long brooding and anxious deliberation over choice of subject or of form.

His work was mainly of two kinds: *first*, the work in the interest of the movement against slavery, — he was the laureate of the abolition group; *second*, the work which reflected the elements and qualities of the domestic life of the average American free people, especially in the more quiet and unaffected aspects of that life. By birth and early environment, he was prepared to become a poet of nature and of men close in touch with the simplest and most natural phases of life.

70. Whittier, the Poet of Freedom. — Many of his poems that belong in the *first* group, in their ringing lines are as applicable to the world-struggle of 1914 and the years following as to the struggle for human freedom in America. In his fervid pleas for freedom, Whittier had not always in mind only the black man, or the black man in an oppressed condition, but any human beings oppressed and downtrodden. President Wilson, in his speech to Congress on April

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11, 1918, characterized the World War as for the emancipation of the world, — "emancipation from the threat and attempted mastery of selfish groups of autocratic rulers." It was against the threats and attempted mastery of selfish individuals and of groups of any sort who were in the act of exploiting the human body and spirit that Whittier fulminated like a prophet of old, though the particular sort of exploitation thought of, in the case of most of the utterances for freedom, was that of the enslaving of black men. Among the poems in this group were *Toussaint L'Ouverture*, *The Slave-ships*, *The Hunters of Men*, *The Farewell of a Virginia Slave Mother*, *The Christian Slave*, *Randolph of Roanoke*, *Ichabod* (1850), and *The Lost Occasion* (1880). Some of the most terrible lines ever written are contained in three or four of these poems. These poems have come to possess historical rather than merely literary value; they are indispensable to any one who would know the history of those times, for in them better than anywhere else can one find the spirit of the abolitionists uttering its deepest convictions and its highest aspirations. Whittier and the other abolitionists were not greatly interested in the political side of the struggle pending between the states. They were not so anxious, as was Lincoln, for the preservation of the Union, as they were for the emancipation of the slave; but the latter had to come in order that the former might be made possible. Hence their work, in its results, was both humanitarian and political.

Whittier's *Centennial Hymn*, celebrating the opening of the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, in 1876, should be mentioned here. Its theme was national peace, but a peace gained through warfare involving the freedom of millions of human beings. Its opening and closing stanzas are these:

> Our Fathers' God, from out whose hand
> The centuries fall like grains of sand,

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We meet to-day, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
To thank Thee for the era done,
And trust Thee for the opening one.

. . . . . .

Oh make Thou us, through centuries long,
In peace secure, in justice strong;
Around our gift of freedom draw
The safeguards of thy righteous law:
And, cast in some diviner mould,
Let the new cycle shame the old!

These lines, after the truly awful outpourings of such a poem as *The Christian Slave*, are mild, indeed, — but peace had come.

Besides these poems concerned with the anti-slavery movement in America, there are others voicing the love of freedom for man elsewhere. Among them is *Freedom in Brazil*, acclaiming the proclamation which was soon to result in no more fettered feet in that great country to the south. The dignity of labor was earlier sung in the volume published in 1850 under the title of *Songs of Labor*. In more than one poem Whittier protested against the attempts of some theologians to hold men's minds in slavery, as in the poem *Calef in Boston*. Whittier sang movingly, also, the sorrows of the Quakers under persecution, and the nobility with which they went through great tribulations. Several of his best ballads are against the attempt of the persecutors to enslave, not the bodies, but, what was worse, the minds, of the Quakers. One of these Quaker ballads is *How the Women Went to Dover*. Another strong Quaker ballad is *Barclay of Ury*. Still another is that original and most naturally written one, *Cassandra Southwick*. Ballad-writing was Whittier's forte.

71. Whittier, the Household Poet. — This forte of Whittier is seen clearly in the *second* important group of his poems, that which we have described as representing the

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domestic life, the quieter, more spontaneous and simple joys and sorrows of the average American citizen, child and man. Many of his best ballads are in this group. They are numerous, but among them are *The Witch of Wenham*, *Mary Garvin*, *John Underhill*, and *Skipper Ireson's Ride*. It is plain to the reader of these that this second group of poems is also permeated with the love of the freedom of men, though that is not, as it is in the first group, always the dominant passion. *Skipper Ireson's Ride* is one of the best of dialect poems, both in faithfulness to life and in poetic measure and emotion.

The poems of this second group are what now make of Whittier's work a household book of song. *Maud Muller*, *Telling the Bees*, *The Swan Song of Parson Avery*, *The Huskers*, *The Angels of Buena Vista*, *Barbara Frietchie*, are all of perennial interest. The "personal" poems, such as *My Playmate*, *The Barefoot Boy*, and *In School Days* are not to be left unconsidered; we could not spare them. *Marguerite* is one of the finest bits of melody and of human feeling, one of the choicest lays, which this continent has produced.

Nor can we at this point omit *The Tent on the Beach*, though it was printed in 1867, for it is so closely associated in thought and motive and melody with all of the loved poems which we have just been praising that its omission in any connection, where Whittier is discussed at length, would be an oversight. It is, as Stedman has said, a "story-book in verse." It is the most like Longfellow's work of all that Whittier has done. The two best known of the stories in this little book of *The Tent on the Beach* are "Abraham Davenport" and "The Wreck of Rivermouth." The latter opens with

> Rivermouth Rocks are fair to see,
> By dawn or sunset shone across,
> When the ebb of the sea has left them free
> To dry their fringes of gold-green moss;

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For there the river comes winding down,
From salt-sea meadows and uplands brown,
And waves on the outer rocks afoam
Shout to its waters, "Welcome home!"

So Whittier could see and speak nobly of nature as well as think and speak fervently of reform. He was a man of real greatness of soul; perhaps, like Lowell, more of a man than a poet, yet a man notable in poetry, for he interpreted nature, helped to make the laws of mankind, and bids fair to be one of those who through their writings will mold the thoughts and the manners, public and domestic, of generations to come.

During the years 1861 to 1892, Whittier composed more than two hundred poems, all of which reveal him to have been one whose mind was vigorous, whose thought was pure, and who loved his fellow-men. Among them are many that will surely survive, — such poems as (in the order of their writing) *Barbara Frietchie, Laus Deo, The Eternal Goodness, Snow-bound, Freedom in Brazil, The Tent on the Beach, Marguerite, John Underhill, Centennial Hymn, The Trailing Arbutus, The Lost Occasion,* and *The Brown Dwarf of Rügen.*

A newspaper item led to the writing of *Barbara Frietchie,* a poem every school-boy knows. *Laus Deo* was written on hearing the bells ring out the news that the Constitutional amendment abolishing slavery had been passed, and is one of the inspired poems of the century. It is exalted and powerful verse. Many critics have thought *The Eternal Goodness* the best religious poem in American literature. Its most loved stanza is

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.

72. ***Snow-bound*** is Whittier's longest poem. It was published in 1866. John Burroughs says of it that it is the

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"most faithful picture of our northern winter that has yet been put into poetry." It is a purely American poem; no other land could have furnished the material for it. Comparison of this poem has often been made with two poems of rustic life in Great Britain, Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* and Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night.* A more vital comparison could be made with Lowell's *Biglow Papers* and Longfe low's *Evangeline;* three more distinctively American poems of high rank than these and *Snow-bound* would be impossible to find. No doubt this winter idyll is Whittier's truest masterpiece. It is written in simplest language, but its character delineation is keen and accurate. As much a "personal" poem it is as *My Playmate* or *The Barefoot Boy.* With all its numerous strongly imaginative touches, perhaps the most appealing of its lines are those presenting the natural fancies of his childhood as Whittier remembered them; such lines as the following are in point, —

> The old familiar sights of ours
> Took marvelous shapes; strange dome and tower
> Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
> Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The bridle-post an old man sat
> With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
> The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
> And even the long sweep, high aloof,
> In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
> Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

Freedom in Brazil is a poem which grows wider and deeper in its appeal to us, as we, in these days of world-engirdling knowledge, are becoming better acquainted with the Latin-American Republics. The strong ballad of *John Underhill;* the lovely lay of *Marguerite;* the *Centennial Hymn,* which could have been written by no one but Whittier; *The Trailing Arbutus,* in which there is an appreciation of nature's beauty second almost to none; *The Lost Occa-*

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sion, softening Whittier's early terrible attack upon Webster, in *Ichabod;* and the tale of *The Brown Dwarf of Rügen* are poems showing a singer of varied resources and of profound genuineness. It may be difficult to grant that he is America's foremost poet; but it is equally difficult to keep from giving him largest notice when American poets are discussed. Upon the death of Whittier, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote,

> Best loved and saintliest of our singing train,
> Earth's noblest tributes to thy name belong.
> A lifelong record closed without a stain,
> A blameless memory shrined in deathless song.

James Russell Lowell (1819–1891)

73. Our Most Versatile American Man of Letters. — The greatest American among those who have given their time largely to literature was James Russell Lowell, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 22, 1819. His abilities were varied. He became a poet, a lawyer, a critical essayist, a humorist, a teacher, an editor, a politician, an orator, and a statesman. Lowell was graduated from both the Harvard College and Law School, studied two years in Europe, succeeded Longfellow as professor of modern languages at Harvard, became editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, and of *The North American Review*, and served as minister to Spain and to England. No one has done more than Lowell to knit together the two great branches of Anglo-Saxon civilization.

James Russell Lowell

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He was fortunate in his friends. His intimacy was strongest with Longfellow; he was most inspired by Emerson; and much stimulated by Holmes and Hawthorne. Lowell was twice married; his first wife, Maria White, a poet of noble intellect and fine charm, greatly influenced his thinking and his work. It was she who led Lowell into his eager advocacy of the anti-slavery cause. Lowell had no small share in the election of Lincoln. Like Lincoln, he was American to the core.

Lowell was gifted with poetic genius. He was richly endowed with imaginative power and with wealth of intellectual experience, but his busy occupation in the affairs of private and public life made it impossible to discipline this gift. At times, nevertheless, he rose to the dignity and beauty of the highest art. He was humanly a great man, greater than all the work which he has left behind him. His nature was eager and impetuous; yet those who, like Longfellow, knew him best, thought him self-poised and cool. With all his imaginative fervor, he carried an immense ballast of common-sense.

His critical and political essays and much of his best poetry belong mainly to the period of the Civil War and after. Before the war, he had, however, established his reputation as a poet. Although in his boyhood and youth Lowell was fond of Burns, and therefore knew and appreciated what is most musical in poetry, yet his own poetry is, in the main, the poetry of thought rather than of melody. Many passages of *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, the *Harvard Commemoration Ode*, and *The Cathedral* reveal the same quality of tone as the work of Tennyson, and even suggest the voice of Milton.

74. Lowell's Poetry. — Lowell's first volume of poems of distinguished worth, *A Year's Life*, was published when he was twenty-two years of age, and, while not attracting widespread public favor, met with approval among competent

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critics. His second volume, entitled simply *Poems*, was published three years later. "A Legend of Brittany" and "Rhœcus" included in this volume, made evident that their author was a poet of metrical skill and imaginative power. He hoped by many of these poems to reach the heart of the people. In "An Incident in a Railroad Car," he expressed this hope, and also his belief in the mission of poetry, —

> It may be glorious to write
> Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
> High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
> Once in a century;
>
> But better far it is to speak
> One simple word, which now and then
> Shall waken their free nature in the weak
> And friendless sons of men;
>
> To write some earnest verse or line,
> Which, seeking not the praise of art,
> Shall make a clearer faith and manhood shine
> In the untutored heart.
>
> He who doth this, in verse or prose,
> May be forgotten in his day,
> But surely shall be crowned at last with those
> Who live and speak for aye.

Lowell's fertility of mind and his abundance of knowledge so freighted his verse that he has not appealed strongly to the "untutored mind." Nevertheless he has not lacked popularity; he accomplishes the feat of making the average reader willing to meditate and reason while reading verse.

In 1846 came the famous *Vision of Sir Launfal;* in 1848 a second volume appeared called *Poems*, and in the same year *A Fable for Critics* and the first series of *The Biglow Papers.*

Lowell's energetic personality is revealed in his poetry. He is intensely modern. If he did not always write with directness, and not always with ease, still his poetry is never

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quite without a romantic glow. He was a scholar; though he refused to be called one, for his culture rested principally, not upon books, but upon direct observation of life. It was his unusually wide familiarity with both literature and life that gave him excess of subject matter and that made his writing somewhat involved and overwhelmingly rich. He was interested primarily in the higher life. Many of the lesser things of life are in his poetry, but all are illumined by his vision of the greater. More than Hawthorne, he believed that for higher living, common service to man is necessary. He saw much with the outer eye; but it is what was perceived by the eye of his mind that stands in the foreground of what he thought and said. All great idealism is religious in some way or another, and Lowell, being a great idealist, was essentially religious.

75. ***A Fable for Critics*** expresses in racing jingles Lowell's opinions of his American contemporaries in the field of letters. It is humorous in almost every line, and yet expressed with precision what Lowell thought of his fellow craftsmen. By no means all of these opinions are or were accepted by others. The estimate of Irving, quoted in a preceding chapter, is, perhaps, the best of all the criticisms, — or witticisms. That of himself is far too self-depreciatory, but makes clear that he understood his own practical nature and reforming purposes as well as his ambition to be a poet of high worth:

> There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
> With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
> He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
> But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
> The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
> Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
> His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
> But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
> And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
> At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem.

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76. ***The Biglow Papers*** are distinctively American, more than Longfellow's *Evangeline*, and as much as Whittier's *Snow-bound*. The first series of *The Biglow Papers* was a direct attack upon the policy back of the Mexican War, the policy of securing territory for the extension of slavery. It was also a more general attack upon any aggressive war, –

> We kind o' thought Christ went ag'in' war an' pillage.

These poems were written in the dialect of the uneducated New England farmer. Lowell knew the rural population well; although, not being born and bred among them, he did not have such power as Whittier to appeal to the rustic mind. Not the least among the unique features of the first series of these *Papers* are the numerous pages of introductory and accompanying notes, which are often more interesting than the verse in the text. In the "Notices of an Independent Press" Lowell quotes reviewing notices from several imagined rural newspapers; and among these is a notice *From the Bungtown Copper and Comprehensive Tocsin* (*a try-weakly family journal*). One sentence ridicules by parody the oratorical grandiloquence of the time, — "It is a work to which the proud genius of our country, standing with one foot on the Aroostook and the other on the Rio Grande, and holding up the star-spangled banner amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, may point with bewildering scorn to the punier efforts of enslaved Europe." The first version of the graceful pastoral with the title of "The Courtin'" (a poem which was rewritten later, and in its final form became a part of the Introduction to the second series of the *Biglow Papers*), is taken from the *Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss*. A few have thought "The Courtin'" Lowell's best poem. The judgment of the majority of readers, critical and uncritical, hardly accords with that estimate, but it is one of the most "true to life" of all American

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poems. In the Introduction is the delightful "charcoal portrait" of the country-school dame, beginning

> Propped on the marsh, a dwelling now, I see
> The humble school-house of my A, B, C,
> Where well-drilled urchins, each behind his tire,
> Waited in ranks the wished command to fire,
> Then all together, when the signal came,
> Discharged their *a-b abs* against the dame.
> Daughter of Danaus, who could daily pour
> In treacherous pipkins her Pierian store,
> She, mid the volleyed learning firm and calm,
> Patted the furloughed ferule on her palm,
> And, to our wonder, could divine at once
> Who flashed the pan, and who was downright dunce.

In a note to No. II of the papers, upon the scientific name for a homely insect (*scarabæus pilularius*), Hosea Biglow comments upon the use of the term in a letter printed as if from Mr. Birdofredum Sawin, thus, —

> it wuz "tumblebug" as he Writ it, but the parson put the Latten instid. i sed tother maid better meeter, but he said tha was eddykated peepl to Boston and tha would n't stan' it no how. idnow as tha *wood* and idnow *as* tha wood.

The second series of *The Biglow Papers* appeared in the form of occasional papers during the years 1862–1866, and at once distinguished James Russell Lowell as the greatest of all American satirists. This series did more to aid the northern cause in the minds of men than any other published work, not even excepting Whittier's poems. Here Lowell was as prodigal of his thought as he had ever been before the war. His skilful use of dialect was nothing short of marvelous; and, what is more, his drawing of three distinct types of New England characters was little less than perfect. These three types were represented by the Rev. Homer Wilbur, Birdofredum Sawin, and Hosea Biglow. Parson Wilbur is a Puritan minister, a pedant, but a patriot, too; Sawin is a thorough grotesque; and Hosea Big-

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low is rough enough, but a serious and deeply fervent patriot, believing with Lowell himself that in the struggle for the Union

Earth's biggest country's gut her soul,
An' risen up Earth's greatest Nation.

And this recalls Lowell's other noble saying that "Our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west, by Justice."

While Lowell was ambassador in London, he brought into close sympathetic relation the United States and the mother-country, by a natural assumption of the attitude which the Briton respects, the attitude of honest, straightforward, brave assertion of his own country's worth and dignity, and by "putting up to" the Briton the issue of friendship.

Staircase, Boston Public Library

All this he had expressed before he became ambassador, in "Jonathan to John," a part of No. II of the second series of *Biglow Papers:*

Shall it be love, or hate, John?
It's you thet's to decide.

Lowell's volume *Under the Willows, and Other Poems* was published in 1868, and contained some forty poems. Of

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these, "The Singing Leaves," "Dara," and "Yussouf," have been favorites with young readers, though they do not equal in poetic value other poems such as "Al Fresco," "Pictures from Appledore," and "In the Twilight."

The Cathedral (1869) is admired, praised, but can never be popular. Many passages in this poem are not surpassed by its author; yet the changes of thought are so swift, and the craftsmanship so unequal, that the poem fails to hold the attention of the ordinary reader.

During this period Lowell wrote four odes of high merit. Of the four the *Harvard Commemoration Ode* best adapts a lofty theme and a complex melody to the common ear. The theme, the wording, and the spirit of this ode are elevated, but they are so united that any attempt to separate them by analysis fails. Beauty, uplift, and the sorrow that refreshes because aspiration suffuses that sorrow, are in those great lines which, better than all else written, have summed up the character of the martyred man who was chief of the nation during its cruel struggle for existence, —

> Great captains, with their guns and drums,
> Disturb our judgment for the hour,
> But at last silence comes;
> These are all gone, and, standing like a tower,
> Our children shall behold his fame,
> The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
> Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
> New birth of our new soil, the first American.

77. Lowell's Political Essays. — Two volumes contain Lowell's political writings, and are entitled *Political Essays* and *Political and Literary Essays*. The second volume contains but few of the many "literary essays" which he wrote. Of the political essays, all of them literature, three stand out noteworthily, "McClellan or Lincoln," "The Place of the Independent in Politics," and "Democracy." The last named is the ablest, and is of such high quality of thought

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that no doubt it will always be read as one of the best of contributions to the description and interpretation of its subject. This essay was written in 1869. During the same year came another, bearing the title "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners," which may be included among his political writings, though it was more than half humorous in its intent. All of Lowell's essays in this group will continue to be read as well for their excellent English as for their political insight and wisdom. Lowell was our foremost scholar in politics.

78. Lowell's Essays in Criticism. — In Lowell's critical essays it is not only the opinions of the author but his character that illuminates the pages. The essays are admirably written. In many instances they are in the nature of reviews, but they often turn out to be better literature than that which is under review. One of the best is the essay entitled, half-apologetically, "Shakespeare Once More." The essay upon Chaucer, one upon Dryden, and one upon Spenser will arouse the lagging intellect of any reader who is wearied with the weight and bulk of criticism with which the world is flooded. The chapter upon Chapman in the volume called *Old English Dramatists* is pure gold.

Lowell has often been censured for lack of sympathy with Thoreau. His critics can hardly have read his essay upon Thoreau, in *The North American Review* of 1865. Almost the last words are:

> Thoreau's whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery. He had fine "translunary things" in him. His better style as a writer is in keeping with the simplicity and purity of his life. We have said that his range was narrow, but to be a master is to be a master. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days; his literature was extensive and recondite; his quotations are always nuggets of the purest ore: there are sentences of his as perfect as anything in the language, and thoughts as clearly crystallized; his metaphors

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and images are always fresh from the soil; he had watched Nature like a detective who is to go upon the stand; as we read him, it seems as if all-out-of-doors had kept a diary and become its own Montaigne.

Lowell's love for literature and his keen perception and judgment of literature are best illustrated in his essay upon *Wordsworth*, — not the speech upon the poet delivered in 1884, but the essay of 1875.

All of these critical essays scintillate with Lowell's irrepressible and almost inexhaustible humor. The essay upon "Chapman" opens in his characteristic manner, — "As I turn from one to another of the old dramatists, and see how little is known about their personal history, I find a question continually coming back, invincible as a fly with a strong sense of duty, which I shall endeavor to fan away with a little discussion." The literary and critical essays of Lowell are now printed in several volumes, though most of them may be found in the three books bearing the attractive titles of *Among My Books*, *My Study Windows*, and *Fireside Travels*.

BEST BOOKS ON THE MID-CENTURY PERIOD

The Spirit of American Literature, JOHN MACY. (Boni and Liveright.)

American Prose Masters, W. C. BROWNELL. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

American Bookmen, M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE. (Dodd, Mead, and Company.)

The New England Poets, WILLIAM C. LAWTON. (The Macmillan Company.)

Great American Writers, W. P. TRENT and JOHN ERSKINE. (Henry Holt and Company.)

American Literature, Etc., EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE. (Ticknor and Company.)

Literary Leaders of America, RICHARD BURTON. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

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CHAPTER V

THE ERA OF NATIONALISM

(1861–1890)

1. Historical Background. — The Civil War, lasting from 1861 to 1865, was the demonstration for all time that the Constitution of the United States is not a mere compact between the states but the organic law of the whole land. That war was a war for the Union, fought for the purpose of convincing all men that these United States constitute a nation; hence it was that the era of nationalism began with the opening of the war and not with its close. The war between the states, the task of reconstructing the states of the south and of readjusting business affairs in the states of the north, and the subsequent growth of national prosperity, fill up the years from 1861 to 1890, or thereabouts. At the latter date we come so well within the memory of living men that we say that thenceforth we are within the period of the present day.

The political, industrial, financial, and social history of this period of war and after-war is so impressive in its material aspects that students of the time are often inclined to overlook the spiritual tendencies which were represented chiefly in the literature of that day. It has often been said that the period was unfruitful in literature. But a period which produced the greatest single piece of literature in the history of American authorship, the *Gettysburg Address* of Lincoln, the literary and political essays of Lowell, most of the work of Mark Twain, and of the man who of all American authors has incited the most violent discussions — Walt Whitman — such a period can hardly be called unfruitful.

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Writers of Prose

2. Varied Character of the Prose Literature. — The prose literature of this era was chiefly in the form of fiction. But there was a literature of political ideals of greatest importance, containing, among other things, the speeches of Lincoln, the political essays of Lowell, and the autobiography of General Grant. Also the ablest literary-critical work done in America was written during this era, in the illuminating interpretations of older authors which proceeded from the pen of Lowell. There were, too, the nature essays of John Burroughs, and the "mere literature," intended principally to engage readers in a pleasing fashion, in the essays of Charles Dudley Warner and in a few of the early essays of Lafcadio Hearn. The most artistic of American historians, Francis Parkman, did his leading work during this time. Humor thrived prodigiously, chief among the humorists being Charles Farrar Browne (Artemus Ward) and Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain). But novelists and short-story writers abounded and wrought mightily, among them a few, such as William Dean Howells, Henry James, and Francis Bret Harte, who, though in width of appeal greatly inferior to Hawthorne and Poe, are securely enrolled among the immortals.

We may consider the prose literature of this period under the following heads: Political and Historical Works; Essays, — Critical, Humorous, of Nature, of Travel; and Fiction, consisting of Novels and Short-Stories.

POLITICS AND HISTORY

3. The *Gettysburg Address*. — In the forefront of all political writings worthy to be termed literature stands the dedicatory *Address* given by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg Cemetery in 1863. The simplicity, the dignity, the loftiness, the firm and yet aspiring resolution of this address,

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reflect the fullness, the elevation, the calm and undaunted attitude of the great statesman who wrote and uttered it. The speech is permeated with a spirit of sadness, such as the occasion and the events in its background would naturally invoke. So far as its author was concerned, he could well claim the same personal irresponsibility for the cause of this sadness as Pericles, the Greek statesman, claimed when he said that "no Athenian had put on mourning through his doing." But there was in the dedication more of profound hope than of sadness, for Lincoln was a man who always took long views.

Photo by Chindinst, from Underwood & Underwood, New York

Lincoln's Tomb, Springfield, Ill.

The thought of the *Gettysburg Address* was built upon the best statesmanlike thought of all time, not alone upon its author's political experience and aspirations. It recalls political ideals as remote in time as those uttered in the famous funeral oration of Pericles delivered over his Athenian dead, in 430 B.C. It recalls the Declaration of Independence. One sentence of it also recalls spoken utterances as recent as 1830, when Daniel Webster, in a speech in the United States Senate, spoke of "the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people." But Lincoln's address transcends all of any other time or place, and is, unquestionably, the finest bit of American prose yet spoken or penned. That almost every school boy and girl the country over commits to memory the words of this address, and yet that, in spite of its familiarity, it never ceases to inspire the interest, reverence, devotion, and loyal aspiration of young and old, is sufficient

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evidence of its high quality. It is the best expression of the moral and political soul of the American people. It is consummate in its eloquence, and it will probably remain the greatest written instrument calling for permanent continuance of liberty and union within this nation. Already the free nations of the world, and those longing to be free, have adopted it as the perfect expression of their desire and assurance of a free and noble civic life.

4. **Ulysses S. Grant** was born April 12, 1822, in a two-room cabin at Point Pleasant, Ohio. His ancestors on both sides had been fighting-men during the Revolutionary War. When Grant was seventeen his father secured for him an appointment to the Military Academy at West Point. It was in connection with this appointment that the young man came to have the name Ulysses S. At birth he had been named "Hiram Ulysses," but through a mistake of his Congressman the name had been recorded at West Point as "Ulysses S." Grant. Young Grant had already transposed his initials to U. H. G., because he did not like the word spelled by combining the three original initials; but from now on his name by the government was recorded as U. S. Grant, though his relatives still knew him as U. H. Grant. At West Point, Grant was good in mathematics, and only fair in his other studies. He had the reputation of being rather unmilitary, though he was the best horseman at the Academy. He was interested in literature and kindred matters, and at graduation was president of the only literary society at West Point.

Previous to the Civil War, Grant saw service in the army, from New York to Portland, Oregon, and to the Isthmus of Panama. Most of this service was barracks life, excepting during the Mexican War, when he served with his regiment in every battle but that of Buena Vista. During the early years of the war between our states his activities were in the west, his chief battles being at Fort Donelson, Shiloh,

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and Vicksburg. In 1864, as he had shown himself everywhere the man to bring order out of chaos and never to know himself whipped, he was given entire conduct of the war, Lincoln saying, "I don't want to know your plans." The result was a year's struggle with General Robert E. Lee and the end of the war, the great Southern general surrendering in the spring of 1865. Grant then said, "I never want to see a soldier's uniform again."

After Lincoln's death, Grant was easily the first citizen of the Republic. In 1868 he was elected to the Presidency, and again in 1872. He was a man of tenacity of purpose, of the utmost simplicity in demeanor, unobtrusive, patient, and with extraordinary memory for the faces of men and for the details of events. He died in 1885; but the last year of his life was devoted to the writing of the *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant.*

Grant's Tomb, Riverside Drive, New York

5. ***Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant.*** — To write this book was a heroic task, for at the time Grant was suffering almost ceaselessly bodily pain, and knew that he was living every hour in the shadow of death. He wrote the book in order that after his death his wife might have means upon which to live. When the book was completed, it was recognized immediately as one of the greatest of all biographical works. It is a transcript of the life of a man who was gentle, modest, candid, and yet great. Its historical value is chiefly in the record of events of the war,

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but there is much of interest in the book besides martial matters. The simplicity and modesty, the open-minded sincerity of the man, and the clearness of his style are evident everywhere. Two incidents in his Texan experiences will illustrate:

Each officer carried a shot-gun, and every evening after going into camp, some would go out and soon return with venison and wild turkeys enough for the entire camp. I, however, never went out, and had no occasion to fire my gun; except, being detained over a day at Goliad, Benjamin and I concluded to go down to the creek — which was fringed with timber, much of it the pecan — and bring back a few turkeys. We had scarcely reached the edge of the timber when I heard the flutter of wings overhead, and in an instant I saw two or three turkeys flying away. These were soon followed by more, then more and more, until a flock of twenty or thirty had left from just over my head. All this time I stood watching the turkeys to see where they flew, with my gun on my shoulder, and never once thought of leveling it at the birds. When I had time to reflect upon the matter, I came to the conclusion that as a sportsman I was a failure, and went back to the house. Benjamin remained out, and got as many turkeys as he wanted to carry back.

After the second night at Goliad, Benjamin and I started to make the remainder of the journey alone. . . . On the evening of the first day out, we heard the most unearthly howling of wolves, directly in our front. The prairie grass was tall and we could not see the beasts, but the sound indicated that they were near. To my ear it appeared that there must have been enough of them to devour our party, horses and all, at a single meal. The part of Ohio that I hailed from was not thickly settled, but wolves had been driven out long before I left. Benjamin was from Indiana, still less populated, where the wolf yet roamed over the prairies. He understood the nature of the animal, and the capacity of a few of them to make believe there was an unlimited number of them. He kept on toward the noise, unmoved. . . . When he did speak it was to ask, "Grant, how many wolves do you think there are in that pack?" Knowing where he was from, and suspecting that he thought I would overestimate the number, I determined to show my acquaintance with the animal by putting the estimate below what possibly could be correct, and answered, "Oh, about twenty,"

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very indifferently. He smiled and rode on. In a minute we were close upon them, and before they saw us. There were just *two* of them. Seated upon their haunches, with their mouths close together, they had made all the noise we had been hearing for the past ten minutes. I have often thought of the incident since, when I have heard the noise of a few disappointed politicians who had deserted their associates. There are always more of them before they are counted.

6. Francis Parkman (1823–1893) was our greatest historian, surpassing the earlier writers in this field, Irving, Motley, Prescott, and Bancroft, and ranking with the leading historians of Europe. He began his exploring among scenes of nature, among books, and among men, by a trip, in 1846, through the western prairies and the Rocky Mountains, living for a considerable period in a Sioux village, and learning the arts of peace and of war among the Indians of that tribe. The result of this in book form was *The Oregon Trail*, one of the simplest and most interesting stories of western exploration and adventure. This book pointed the way to Parkman for all his future work, which was to be the telling of the story of the North American Indian in his contact with English and French settlers in the New World, involving the struggle between England and France for supremacy in America.

Francis Parkman

The Conspiracy of Pontiac told the tale of the downfall of the "Six Nations." Then, between 1865 and 1892, there came from Parkman's hand *Pioneers of France in the New*

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World, The Jesuits of North America, La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West, The Old Régime in Canada, Count Frontenac and New France, Montcalm and Wolfe, and *A Half Century of Conflict.*

Like Prescott a little earlier, Parkman labored under the handicap of near-blindness. This trouble led him to an interest in amateur gardening, and in 1866 he published a *Book of Roses,* still interesting and authoritative to both amateur and professional rosarians. In 1871 he became professor of Horticulture in Harvard College; but his ill-health prevented his retaining this position long. It then seemed best that he should turn back to his main work of historical study and authorship.

So many volumes from Parkman in such a field as that of history is evidence of great industry. But Parkman was not an industrious worker only; he was also accurate, thorough to minuteness, a stylist of the highest quality, and all this in a realm of human history where almost none had made search before him. For the most part, his material was collected for the first time by himself; and the comparison of all this material and the sifting of it down to the proportion of readable volumes, was the task of an indefatigable laborer. A true history, Professor John Nichol says, "demands a knowledge of details rarely combined with the power to grasp a whole: it involves a perfect idea of the proportion of parts, keen analysis of character, broad synthesis of national movements on or beneath the surface, the impartial verdicts of a judge and the skill of an artist, the zeal of a moralist tempered by the sense of the politician, the sympathies of the antiquary with the past, almost the insight of the prophet into the future. Such histories are necessarily few." Parkman's histories are among the few. He was a superior artist. His style was not only vivid, brilliant, and picturesque, but also truthful. No facts were distorted for the sake of a beautiful sentence, and none distorted to make

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a moral or a political point. His style is pleasing; he was a profound moralist; his political foresight was almost prophetic; but truthful he was first and foremost.

7. *Montcalm and Wolfe* is his best work, a charming and powerful book in its thought, in its story, and in its portraits of historical characters. The closing words contain his warning and his hope for America: —

> Her citizens "have become a nation that may defy every foe but that most dangerous of all foes, herself: destined to a majestic future, if she will shun the excess and perversion of the principles that made her great, prate less about the enemies of the present, resist the mob and the demagogue as she resisted Parliament and King, rally her powers from the race for gold and the delirium of prosperity to make firm the foundations on which that prosperity rests, and turn some fair proportion of her vast mental forces to other objects than material progress and the game of party politics. She has tamed the savage continent, peopled the solitude, gathered wealth untold, waxed potent, imposing, redoubtable, and now it remains for her to prove, if she can, that the rule of the masses is consistent with the individual; that democracy can give the world a civilization as mature and pregnant, ideas as energetic and vitalizing, and types of manhood as lofty and strong, as any of the systems which it boasts to supplant."

Essays

8. **Critical Essays.** — Since the middle of the nineteenth century the rapid growth of periodicals has led to an enormous amount of reviewing of literature, though not a large part of this reviewing can justly be called critical. So-called "reviewing" as a rule does too much of stating only what is in that which is reviewed; contenting itself, that is, with analysis. There is not enough that is explanatory, judicial, and willing to go to the trouble to ascertain the historical background of the subject. One is tempted occasionally to define a "reviewer" as a man who is too busy to read books. The stating of the meaning, the finding of the values, and

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the accounting for the existence of such an author and such a book, appear to be too difficult or too time-consuming for the average newspaper or magazine reviewer. But these things are necessary to good criticism. A few excellent critics belong to this period before 1890. The ablest, the most enduring critical essays were written by James Russell Lowell, and have already received consideration; but Sidney Lanier and Henry James also contributed some critical work that was serious, interesting, and adequate to its task. Of the two last-named critics, only Lanier can be said to have a popular following. James's success lay in the field of fiction.

9. Sidney Lanier was richly endowed, a poet and a musician, though not so scholarly as Lowell and James. Two of his books, containing what had originally been lectures, and now entitled *The Science of English Verse* and *The English Novel and the Principles of its Development*, show a great deal of gifted insight and deep though controlled sympathy.

Humorous Essays. — The American democracy during the second half of the nineteenth century seems to have thought that since humor is the one touch that makes the whole world kin, therefore for all to be akin, for all to be democratic, everybody must cultivate humor. But the man who put American humor into the front rank (though Benjamin Franklin was its founder) was Mark Twain.

Mark Twain (1835–1910)

10. Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in Missouri, in 1835. His childhood was spent upon the banks of the Mississippi River, then the great highway of commerce between the Middle Western states and the Gulf of Mexico. At the age of thirteen he began a career of journalism by taking a job as printer's boy. Here better than in the public school he learned the "minor moralities of literature," spelling, punctuation, and grammar. He soon set out as a

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journeyman printer, working in many places, including St. Louis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and New York. But the call of the Great River was insistent, and, in 1851, he became what during all his boyhood he had longed to be, a river-boat pilot. The outcome was rich for literature. In 1861 Clemens was engaged in Nevada mining, and in editing the Virginia City (Nev.) *Enterprise*. To this paper he contributed many humorous bits, signing his contributions "Mark Twain," in memory of the call from the man who takes soundings from the deck of the Mississippi river-boat. Another result of his ten years as a pilot was the *Life on the Mississippi*, picturesque but sincerely real sketches of the fifteen hundred miles of river life, together with several accounts associated with people and events, such as the visits to America of Charles Dickens and of Mrs. Trollope, the celebration of the Mardi Gras at New Orleans, a visit to George Washington Cable, and some Indian legends.

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Mark Twain

11. Mark Twain's Works. — Mark Twain associated himself with journals in San Francisco, and was interested

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in mining operations in California. He went to Hawaii for six months. On his return he lectured in California, then journeyed to New York, and there published in 1867 *The Jumping Frog and Other Sketches.* A voyage to Europe led to the writing of a book of immediate and great popularity, *The Innocents Abroad* (1869). It is a burlesque upon books of travel, and in this field of authorship has worked a revolution. Never again will a self-respecting author write in the gushing tone of irrational worship of what he has seen abroad. Mark Twain has compelled all who travel and are thoughtful, either to say nothing or to speak in terms of intelligent understanding of the relative values of things they have seen. Two books representing American life on the plains quickly followed, — *Roughing It,* and *The Gilded Age,* the latter in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner. Another story of American life is *Puddin'-Head Wilson.* It belongs to the author's later years, is an original and vigorous character sketch, and an estimate of the life of a typical American community. Gravely humorous wisdom and cutting social satire make *Puddin'-Head Wilson* one of the unsurpassed books in the literature of the New World.

Two of Mark Twain's books are historical romances, one of the days of King Edward VI of England and the other of the days of King Arthur and the Round Table. The first is *The Prince and the Pauper,* the second *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court.* The first is a story of absorbing interest for boys, the second no less interesting for adults. Both were the result of the author's intense love for the liberty of modern countries and institutions. Setting a whole kingdom by the ears simply through having a young king and a pauper exchange clothes, and befuddling the chivalrous ages by a modern Yankee who through up-to-date science can outdo all the magic of Merlin, were intended to help us to understand and love democracy. These books are full of truth to human nature everywhere and of all time.

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Another book, *The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, not published until 1896, might also be termed a historical romance; but the details of the book are so true to the actual surroundings of the heroine portrayed that the book is better styled history. There is humor, even some comedy, but chiefly there is Mark Twain's reverence for beauty, making the tragedy of the brave young maid of Orleans something eternally bright and fair. Doubtless the votes of future mature readers will be cast in favor of this book above all others of Mark Twain's making. Perhaps *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* will take second place. Yet all of the lofty idealism beneath the surface of the second and permeating the whole texture of the first, will not be likely to supplant in interest for young readers the two delineations of the nature of universal boy found in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and in *Tom Sawyer*. There are many fine studies of the American boy, by Charles Dudley Warner, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, William Dean Howells, William Allen White, and Charles D. Stewart, but none to equal these two by Clemens. They contain, also, profound glimpses into the social conditions and habits of people in the Mississippi Valley who were older than Tom and Huck. These books stand almost alone in American literature as achievements of creative power which cannot be explained upon grounds of observation and skill. They are products of the inner impulse and concentration of power which we are wont to call inspiration.

Mark Twain wrote other books, *A Tramp Abroad* (1880) and *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg* (1900) the best among them; *Eve's Diary* and *Adam's Diary* are the poorest. Some one has said that Hadleyburg is a town lying on the east bank of the Mississippi River and extending eastward to the west bank, so realistic is the picture of the possibilities of be-fooling human nature in any community. Mark Twain is not over-reverent; but he was never vulgar as some

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have asserted. He makes Puddin'-Head Wilson say, "There are no people quite so vulgar as the over-refined." All Mark Twain's books are essays in the Baconian sense, — "assaying," testing human life.

12. Charles Dudley Warner. — On the same street in Hartford, Connecticut, for a number of years lived Mark Twain, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Charles Dudley Warner. *The Gilded Age* was written by Mark Twain and Warner in collaboration, and its chief character, Colonel Sellers, is one of the most colossal of all comic creations. But Charles Dudley Warner was a humorist on his own account. Warner was born in Massachusetts in 1829, of New England farmer parentage, a descendant of the Puritan class of whom Hawthorne has written so well. He was a prize student at Hamilton College, and while there began writing for New York magazines. In 1850 he was surveying in Missouri. Then, like many others destined to be American men of letters, he became a lawyer. He practised this profession a short time in Chicago, after his graduation in law from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1867 he became editor of the *Hartford Courant*, and remained on its staff until the close of his life. He was also connected with *Harper's Magazine*, succeeding George William Curtis. He died in 1900.

Charles Dudley Warner

13. Warner's literary work was an outgrowth of his journalistic labors. Letters written from Europe, under the ap-

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propriate heading of *Saunterings*, attracted a wide circle of readers. Besides his share in *The Gilded Age*, Warner wrote three other novels, the most successful being *A Little Journey in the World*. But he was first of all a humorous essayist, his humor displaying itself in whimsical pleasantries, however, rather than in the grotesque exaggeration inherited from Franklin and so prevalently characteristic of American humor. His best work is contained in *My Summer in a Garden* and *Back-log Studies*. A volume entitled *The Relation of Literature to Life* reveals his exalted conception of the responsibilities of an author, and makes useful reading to-day when literature is widely employed for commercial and propagandist ends. In large measure Warner was a constructive critic in the spheres of literature, politics, and religion, so much so that he falls short only of ranking among the essayists who, in the English language, are at the summit, — and their company is small. One may not miss the mark in asserting that *My Summer in a Garden* will be of perennial interest to all who love the out-of-doors and to the student of the whims and quirks of human nature. Another of this author's books is *Being a Boy*, a study of the actual life of the New England farm-boy of eighty years ago. It is an authentic picture of what rural life in that day brought of duty, of pleasure, and of thought. Whittier, who read the book more than once, exclaimed that it was a page out of his own life-story.

14. Artemus Ward. — A generation ago to have left Artemus Ward (whose real name was Charles Farrar Browne) out of a history of American literature would have been an unforgivable omission. Perhaps the world will never willingly let die the combination of scathing satire and good-humor of *Artemus Ward: His Book*. But the evidence for this unwillingness appears to grow less with each passing decade of time. Artemus Ward is still remembered as the most celebrated of the broader school of American humor-

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ists, and occasionally he is really read by some one who has heard that he is memorable. Some of his sayings will not be forgotten, however commonplace the jokes which they contain, — as, that he was willing to sacrifice to his country "even his wife's relations." It is not probable that men and women will ever cease to follow his advice always to "live within your income, even if you have to borrow money to do so." Nor will the eager debaters on both sides of the phonetic spelling controversy ever fail to recall his regret that Chaucer did not know how to spell.

Charles Farrar Browne was a Maine man, born in 1834, dying in England in 1867. The book mentioned above was first published during the Civil War, in 1862. A number of other books came from him, among them *Artemus Ward: His Book of Goaks* (1865) and *Artemus Ward in London* (1867), but none of them can be ranked with *Artemus Ward: His Book.* Ward dealt in light, but broad burlesque, yet usually directed it against things that were either contemptible or in need of ridicule. He did not leave himself unscathed; though there was little in him that was worthy of adverse criticism. He was unassuming, refined, diffident, and a well-nigh perfect artist at harmless entertainment. Speaking of himself lecturing in London, he said:

> It was a grand scene, Mr. Artemus Ward standing on the platform talking; many of the audience sleeping tranquilly on their seats, others leaving the room and not returning; others crying like a child at some of the jokes; — all, all formed a most impressive scene, and showed the powers of this remarkable orator. And when he announced that he should never lecture in that town again, the applause was absolutely deafening.

15. The Literary Naturalists. — Various nature writers occupy the attention of one going far into a detailed study of our literature after Thoreau, who was the best of them all. Henry van Dyke, Bradford Torrey, and Olive Thorne Miller must at least be mentioned; but John Burroughs

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alone had a literary touch at all comparable with that of Thoreau. Even Burroughs had far less originality of thought, though his studies of nature, like Thoreau's, are all related to human life. He was not a scientist in out-door affairs, as the term scientist is generally understood; but by full sixteen volumes of essays, a few of which deal with purely literary topics, he newly and freshly brought to many of his readers the color and flavor, the very witchery of the woods and the fields. He offered himself as a guide to many matters out-of-doors and to a few in-doors; he was accepted and followed by the reader unversed in natural science, as well as by scientific readers. He is also generally admired for his skill in the magic of language. He called himself a "literary naturalist." The facts of nature live in his pages, but he did not slavishly copy those facts into his books. As he said of the literary naturalist, "More comes out in his account than goes into the original experience. . . . Literature does not grow wild in the woods." Still, he did not give wrong impressions of nature, for it is always clear that his writings are nature plus the man who writes of her; though he insisted that he does not attempt to improve upon nature, but to draw her out, absorb her, and reproduce her tinged with the colors of the spirit.

16. John Burroughs was born at Roxbury, New York, April 3, 1837, and died in March, 1921. He lived upon the banks of the Hudson River, overlooking the majestic stream and the much-loved wooded heights beyond. His literary career began while he was a government clerk in Washington, keeping a vault in which bank-notes were stored. There he wrote his first book, *Wake-Robin*, and most of the chapters of *Winter Sunshine*. In writing these books his motive was to find solace in the memories of birds and other out-door things that had charmed him in the summer days of his youth. After leaving Washington in 1873 he wrote fourteen other volumes, chiefly upon nature, especially animal

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life, and upon literary men and books. But no one of his later books surpasses the earlier ones, *Wake-Robin*, *Winter Sunshine*, *Locusts and Wild Honey*, and *Birds and Poets*.

John Burroughs

17. Travelers. — In travel books America has been prolific; though books of such a high order of manner and of matter that they could not be pushed off the shelves by succeeding ones in the same fields of travel have been few. In this period belongs the work of Henry Morton Stanley (originally John Rowlands) who, though he was born and died in the British Isles, was a Confederate soldier and later in the United States navy. Henry M. Stanley's first and best-known work, *How I Found Livingstone* (1872), is a journalist's vital record of hazardous exploration in central Africa. George Kennan's *Tent-Life in Siberia* (1870) as both picture and interpretation is still the best we have upon a little known but rapidly changing country.

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Fiction

18. The writers of fiction from Civil War days until the last decade of the nineteenth century include a few who are second only to our greatest. The greatest of all our fiction writers have been Irving, Cooper, Poe, and Hawthorne. The few of no less than second rank during the period 1861 to 1890 were, in the field of the novel, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Dean Howells, Henry James, and George Washington Cable; in the field of the short-story, two of these (James and Cable), and in addition Francis Bret Harte and Joel Chandler Harris. Then came, ranking below these, among the novelists, Charles Dudley Warner, Lew Wallace, Helen Hunt Jackson, Louisa May Alcott, Frank R. Stockton, Edward Eggleston, Sarah Orne Jewett, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Mary N. Murfree (she called herself Charles Egbert Craddock), Thomas Nelson Page, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps; among the short-story writers, four of those just mentioned (Stockton, Page, Miss Jewett, and Miss Murfree) and Richard Malcolm Johnston, Edward Everett Hale, and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. So far as excellent workmanship is concerned, no writers of fiction anywhere or at any time have surpassed these story-writers, though some of these Americans have not possessed genius of a quality equal to their craftsmanship.

The work of Mark Twain, considered in preceding pages, falls outside of the history of the novel. His longer fictions are historical romances and humorous sketches in series form rather than "familiar relation of such things as pass every day before our eyes" (whether we see them or not is another matter) "such as may happen to our friends or to ourselves." Such are not the common things in the books of Mark Twain, however delectable those books may be.

19. William Dean Howells, however, is the author of what are unmistakably novels. They are based upon keen

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and constant observation of life as it is, every book from *Their Wedding Journey* published in 1871 to *The Vacation of the Kelwyns* in 1920, published after his death. They do not in each instance merely tell a story. Each pictures a human character, and the picturing is true to the impulses, the motives, and the principles which form the life of real men and women. Howells is a realist in literature. That is to say, he is one who, writing frankly of characters and events that are invented, writes of them in such a way that his readers are led to think and feel about those characters and events as they would of actual people in the situations in life which correspond to those in his novels. Not that Howells has taken all life as his province. He has, rather, deliberately chosen to depict commonplace people, because he has believed that it is they who constitute a field new or hitherto neglected. This theory and this practice of Howells have resulted in disappointments among some readers, particularly because his portrayal of womanhood seems to some inadequate. In response to the question, "Why don't you give us a grand, noble, perfect woman," Howells replied that he was waiting for the Almighty to make one. But he added, more seriously, that he was extremely opposed to what are called ideal characters, that their portrayal is mischievous, because in the creation of an ideal there is

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William Dean Howells

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such a vast quantity of sentimentality mixed with the truth that the result is obnoxious and nauseous. This differs from the belief of Charles Dudley Warner, who, in his *Relation of Literature to Life*, asserts that one of the worst characteristics of modern fiction is its so-called truth to nature, its attempts to give the reader unidealized pictures of life. Realism versus idealism is often a question of animal behavior versus human behavior.

In his faithful delineation of the social life which he saw, Howells was never dull. We are sure that he must have learned more from his youthful up-bringing in literature than he was willing to acknowledge. Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, Dickens's *Christmas Stories*, Scott's metrical romances, such as *The Lady of the Lake*, and the writings of Goldsmith, Cervantes, and Irving, were read to him and by him again and again, together with many of the best novels. It is impossible that this reading did not act as a balance check against too pronounced a tendency to become "naturalistic" in the sense of depicting animal traits in men at the expense of human traits.

20. Howells's Novels. — Many novels go to Howells's account, the best being, according to fairly general agreement, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, *A Modern Instance*, *Their Wedding Journey*, and *April Hopes*. Next to these come, among others, *A Chance Acquaintance*, *A Foregone Conclusion*, *The Lady of the Aroostook*, and *The World of Chance*.

21. Howells's Other Work. — Howells wrote much verse, most of it in imitation of Tom Moore, Goldsmith, Pope, and Heine. He also wrote some farce-comedies, which, despite the inanity of their woman characters, have been very popular. He did much editorial work: notably on the *Atlantic Monthly*, beginning in 1872 and covering ten years of time, during which period he established the department called The Contributors' Club; and on *Harper's Magazine*, for six years. Howells was an able critic; and

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surely of him a Disraeli could not say that a critic is an author who has failed.

Howells was United States consul at Venice from 1861 to 1865, partly as a reward for having written a campaign biography of Lincoln. The author was only twenty-three years of age when he wrote that book, but it still stands as an excellent story and interpretation of the great President before he became the first official of the land.

He wrote many other books than those we have noticed thus far. None of them has been more read than *A Boy's Town*, which is an unaltered transcript of his life at Hamilton, Ohio, from his third to his eleventh year; perhaps the most faithful to fact of any boy's life ever written, and a genuinely delightful book. It was not published until 1890. Another excellent boys' book, *The Flight of Pony Baker*, was published in 1902.

22. Henry James is a writer difficult to speak of to the present generation, because what he has written during this generation has been lacking in the popularity which was accorded to the books he wrote before the eighties of the nineteenth century. His early work was so deft in workmanship, so quick and keen in the reporting of personal impressions of what he had seen, so deeply sympathetic with the good things there are in this world, that he was rewarded at once with popular favor. Especially acceptable to the reading public were *Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1877), and *Daisy Miller* (1878); much less so *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), and *The Princess Casamassima* (1886), though the last of these is, perhaps, the masterpiece among his longer works.

Henry James was born in New York City, in 1843, the son of a philosophical and theological writer whose name was also Henry James. Another son was the famous pragmatic philosopher of Harvard University, Professor William James. The education of the younger Henry James was ac-

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quired under his father's direct supervision, in Swiss, French, and German schools, and in the Harvard Law School. From 1869 to his death in 1915, James spent much of his time abroad, "carrying his country under his hat," though he kept his citizenship here until after the outbreak of the Great War, when, as a protest against our reluctance to enter the conflict, he became a citizen of the British Empire.

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Henry James

23. James's novels are concerned principally with American characters in Europe and European characters in America. He has often been called the founder of the "international novel." His practice in the novel (and later in the short-story) was to place his characters, cleverly intellectual people as a rule, in some striking situation and then proceed to analyze their actions and their thoughts. Many novel readers cannot tolerate James because they think he analyzes to excess. But, as he said, "the good American will now be a more critical person than his complacent and confident grandfather. He has eaten of the tree of knowledge, and will not be a skeptic or a cynic, but an observer." While it is true that to show what a character is by letting him do things rather than by analyzing his mind, makes a better *story*, it does not necessarily make a truer or more important character. Nowadays, more than ever before, many people are interested in being told what a character is rather than what he happens to do. The characters James was interested in had a limited range of personal interests and limited social surroundings, though they can be found

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in every large city in the world, from Tokio westward to Mexico City, in all polished, educated, refined society. And these characters, limited as they are, James knew to the very bottom. To their analysis, too, he brought more brains than were used by most of his contemporaries in the realm of prose fiction.

Europeans, during the period of our national expansion, were accustomed to bring a railing accusation against the United States as given over to nothing but the pursuit of wealth, as being a most materialistic country. That *was* an age of power, but of power because an age of idealism, as the generation of our day is amply proving, and as it could not prove had it not had its inheritance of ideals from those who lived and wrought yesterday. The author who is now becoming recognized as the American writer who most capably of all represented the idealism of the last generation, is Henry James. This recognition is not wide-spread; but it will increase, because the careful reader (and he is increasing in numbers) finds in James deep intimacy with character, and burning sincerity. Henry James, "student of men, women, books, and places," was a great artist in composition, a man aflame with purity of purpose, one who believed in the invincibility of goodness.

He was prone to a somewhat elusive analysis of character, elusive to the reader because of the length to which he carried elaboration of detail; *The Liars* contains about twenty thousand words, though it is almost, if not quite, the longest of his short-stories. He indulges in psychological delving, in *Brooksmith*, for example, much as Browning had done in his later poems. He lacks the lucidity and grace of Aldrich, — James's *The Real Right Thing* as compared with Aldrich's *Quite So* proves that. But he is a master, among fictionists, at thinking about men and women, and particularly a master in the use of feeling to suggest image and thought, — as is so well illustrated in *The Real Thing* (not

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the story mentioned above, with similar title), and in *The Madonna of the Future*, an exquisite story. He could write a story as nerve-racking as any by Poe, as he did in *The Turn of the Screw*. Strange and unusual material often attracted him; perhaps *The Altar of the Dead* contains the most unusual subject matter of any of his stories, though it rarely appeals to the young student as being worthy of high rank. The stories in which James's great interest in the life of art is shown are certain of approval, however; and of these *The Madonna of the Future* and *The Lesson of the Master* are excellently representative.

24. George Washington Cable was born in New Orleans in the year 1844. As a mere lad he had a hankering after a career of adventure; but, finding that he could not immediately embark upon a search for adventures throughout the world, he turned his attention to the next best thing, books of travel. He was also an inveterate reader of Shakespeare, Scott, Cooper, Burns, and the Bible. Before he was fifteen his father died, and young Cable left school to earn his livelihood. He was employed for a time in a customs house, where he found pleasure in marking the "silks and spices from the East, the delft from Holland, olives from Spain, linens from England, and calicoes from France," and while doing this he took many imaginary voyages to those parts of the earth. At the age of nineteen he entered a Mississippi Cavalry regiment, and served the South for the remaining two years of the war;

Photo by Brown Bros., N. Y.
George W. Cable

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but carried his Latin grammar and reader through the entire term of his military service.

At the close of the war, Cable took up commercial life again, at the same time contributing articles to the New Orleans *Picayune*, rising before four in the morning to do his writing. Soon he found in newspapers of old New Orleans of the days of the French ownership of the Louisiana Territory, many charming episodes recorded from the social life of the Creoles of those picturesque days. These episodes he relived in his imagination and wove into short-stories. From the short-stories he passed to the writing of two novels, *The Grandissimes* and *Dr. Sevier*, and a book of three novelettes, *Bonaventure*.

The first of these novels is a vivid portrayal of domestic and social events of the Creole days, somber in parts, as in the episode of "Bras Coupé," but charming in other parts, depicting the grace, the exquisiteness, the beauty, the naiveté, and also the true nobility which characterized many of the Creoles at the time of the Louisiana Purchase and for many years after. *Dr. Sevier* is a Civil War story, dealing mainly with one character, who is a noble and unselfish hero, the man who gives his name as title to the book. Both this novel and *The Grandissimes* have considerable historical value. The latter is one of the best American novels.

Bonaventure may be thought of as a volume of three novelettes, so easy it is to read its three parts separately and still have a sense that a well-rounded completeness has been achieved in each. But the whole book is held together by the career of one leading character, whose name is used as title. It is difficult to lay aside the book when once one has begun to read it. Few works of fiction have a finer quality of that indefinable thing we call literary charm. It is noteworthy for bringing into literature the Acadian for the first time since the appearance of Longfellow's *Evangeline*. The Acadians in Cable's book are descendants of those who in

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Longfellow's poem had found refuge in the prairies of southern Louisiana.

Cable has published many historical and political articles, all of them, as well as his fiction, notable for large faith in the ultimate coming of humanity to the goal of good. But his place in the history of literature is fixed more firmly by his being a pioneer in a new territory for fiction, the old South. Thus far he has been the best worker in that territory. One who has not yet read his stories of the old Creole days has, from this record of a unique civilization, a new literary sensation to experience. Cable employs dialect, studied from life, and presents all of it in language approaching the borderland between poetry and prose, all limpidly clear, full of humor and pathos, and, at times, tragedy. He is one of our foremost examples of self-trained genius.

George W. Cable in his short-stories of the Creoles did new work, presenting a people hitherto not written of. He did original work in making the physical surroundings and the social atmosphere, the local color, actual participants in the events of the stories. He did almost perfect work in so employing the sentiments and passions of men and women that we are made to feel both their utter sacredness when rightly used and their terrible destructiveness when given way to in accordance with the baser motives. He was, that is to say, a sound moralist; yet he was a moralist whose stories are not made heavy or obtrusively and unnecessarily instructional, but in their material are at balance with the truth of things as they are in this world of right and wrong, of good and bad.

Cable is still living (1921), and as late as 1918 was still writing of the vanished civilization of old New Orleans. His best and most popular book of Creole tales is entitled *In Old Creole Days*. To Cable the Creole is a white, of French descent, but not peasant descent as were the Acadians, or "Cajuns," and with not the least admixture of negro blood.

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The English language, as those Louisiana French attempted to speak it, was, of course, affected by the usual French difficulty with our rougher speech, and affected also by the indolent, drawling use of the tongue practiced by their negro slaves. The result was a dialect very musical and almost magically expressive of the semi-indolent and yet explosive Creole temperament.

Cable's descriptive powers are of the highest quality, — Lafcadio Hearn, the master at description, has emphatically testified to that. They were employed in faithfully setting forth what Cable saw of the grace and, at times, of the sad and even cruel gestures of life, and the beauty and richness of Southern scenery. Who that has read "Jean-ah-Poquelin," "Posson Jone," "Mme. Delphine," "Belles Demoiselles Plantation," and "'Tite Poulette" in the *Old Creole Days*, and any one of the three parts of *Bonaventure*, can ever forget the striking, even startling, impressions made by the beauty and the strangeness of the Southern Louisiana scenery? One does not feel that one has read about it, but has seen it; perhaps during some dream in which one was awake! The word-pictures of Cable we may call miniatures, cameos, pastels, anything we like, but they remain with the mind as such little pictures in words only can remain. *In Old Creole Days* is a greater book than the novel *The Grandissimes;* it has already become a classic, and not for the shelves up where we cannot reach it, but for the library table.

25. The Minor Novelists. — Minor novelists from the beginning of the Civil War until about 1890 were many in number, though comparatively few of them are still known. Some of those few were novelists only, or chiefly novel-writers and but incidentally producers of short-stories; others wrote short-stories primarily and incidentally a novel or so. In the first group belonged Lew Wallace, Helen Hunt Jackson, Louisa M. Alcott, Edward Eggleston, Elizabeth Stuart

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Phelps, and Frances Hodgson Burnett. In the second group were Edward Everett Hale, Francis Richard Stockton, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Sara Orne Jewett, Mary N. Murfree, and Richard Malcolm Johnston. The second group will be considered with the short-story writers.

26. Lewis Wallace, whose first name was shortened to Lew during his army service, was a Hoosier, born at Brookville, Indiana, in 1827. As a boy he was skilled at sketching, painted a little, and wrote a poor romance whose scene was laid in Europe in the tenth century. At the age of twenty he organized a military company and went south to take part in the Mexican War. There turned out to be little for him to do. After the war he studied and practiced law at Covington, until 1852, when he removed to Crawfordsville. Here he made his home until his death in 1905. During the Civil War he performed notable service under Grant, and was made a major-general. The close of the war returned him to the practice of the law. But his youthful passion for romance-writing being still strong upon him, three successful stories resulted.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Lewis Wallace

In 1873 Wallace published *The Fair God.* This was a romance of the conquest of Mexico by Cortez, filled with surprises, yet an apparently accurate picture of the splendid Aztec civilization. Then came his best novel, *Ben Hur,* most of which was written during the three years of his residence at Santa Fe, while serving under President Hayes as Governor of the Territory of New Mexico. *Ben Hur* was published in 1880. The book is much indebted to Wallace's

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study of Sir Walter Scott, particularly of the great novelist's *Ivanhoe*. Its story occurs during the life-time of Jesus. The meeting of the Wise Men, a fight at sea, and the chariot race are famously interesting passages; the scenes in which Jesus is a figure are written with judgment, taste, and reverence. President Garfield appointed General Wallace minister to Turkey, and urged him to write a book whose scene should be in Constantinople. Wallace set to work upon the study of the struggles between Mohammedan and Christian. The result was the historical novel, *The Prince of India*, not printed until 1893 and inferior to the other two of Wallace's popular books.

27. Helen Hunt Jackson. — Amherst, Massachusetts, in 1831, was the birthplace of Helen Fiske, who became Mrs. Hunt, the wife of an army captain, and later Mrs. Jackson, the wife of a Denver banker. Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson died in San Francisco in 1885.

Mrs. Jackson wrote under the pseudonym of H. H. In 1881 her ablest book, *A Century of Dishonor*, was published, and laid bare the disgraceful treatment long accorded the North American Indian. Three years later she was appointed special commissioner of the government to investigate the condition of the Mission Indians of California, and in 1884 published her novel, *Ramona*, a deservedly popular idealization of the California Indian and Spaniard. A few of her poems, highly imaginative, especially *Morn*, *Thought*, *Spring*, and *Coronation*, are not inferior to her work in prose.

28. Louisa May Alcott. — The autobiography of Louisa M. Alcott, daughter of Bronson Alcott, the Concord teacher and talking philosopher, is, in all the ideality and poetry of it, in great part contained in that book dear to three generations of children, *Little Women*. Her publisher reports *Little Women* as selling over twenty-five thousand copies in 1920, the fiftieth year since its first issue. She was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1833, but lived nearly all her

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life in New England, dying in 1888. *Little Men*, *An Old-fashioned Girl*, *Eight Cousins*, and *Rose in Bloom*, especially the first one of these, are only a little less popular than *Little Women*. Other volumes she wrote, but none so successful. Plain and pure living, high thinking, noble aspirations, simple and healthful joys, are the ideals which fill these books and which through these books have found echoes in the lives of numberless men and women in America and abroad. "Children's Books" have become, under the influence of the demand created by Miss Alcott, a different thing from what they had been before. To take a lasting hold to-day upon the thought and imagination, books for children must be not only exciting but real; and to be of wholesome moral influence it is necessary now that they not only teach good living, but teach it freshly and entertainingly.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York

Louisa May Alcott

29. Edward Eggleston. — Another pioneer in literature was Edward Eggleston. He was a pioneer in one respect, that he opened the field of the Middle West to fiction. The Eastern States had been found by many writers to be rich in material, and Bret Harte had discovered California; but the Middle West was almost unknown to American writers of fiction until after the publication, in 1871, of *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*. Eggleston was born at Vevay, Indiana, in 1837. He was self-educated, and in the process he learned several languages. He became a "circuit rider" of the Methodist Church, — in other words, an itinerant minister. For a time he was a Bible Society agent in Minnesota. Then he became a journalist, on the editorial staff of several periodicals, among them *The Independent;* next a pastor in

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Brooklyn. Finally he removed to a country place on the shore of Lake George, where he devoted himself to historical writing. He died in 1902, leaving completed, in addition to his fiction, three historical works, all relating to American life.

Eggleston published several biographies of North American and Central American Indian warriors and chieftains. In these biographies he performed a unique task, as nothing quite like them had appeared, and none has since appeared of equal value. His more worth-while work was his fiction. Among several novels, the most commendable are *The Circuit Rider*, *Roxy*, *The Hoosier Schoolboy*, *The Graysons*, and, best of all, *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*. In these books their author painted what he saw. Eggleston in his work was both conscientious and artistic; above all he was a lover of man.

30. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. — A popular book, though not its author's most praiseworthy, was *The Gates Ajar*, published in 1868. It was half novel, half a religious treatise, giving in the form of a diary a kind of prose "In Memoriam," which contained the thoughts and experiences of a young woman who had recently lost a deeply loved brother. Coming soon after the close of the civil war, this book touched a responsive chord in the hearts of great numbers of American people. It had gleams of humor, though they are now appreciated more than they were then, if one may judge from the adverse criticisms which certain theologians passed upon the book. The criticizing theologians of that day seem now to have been stupid; but that was a

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

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time of extreme conservatism. *The Gates Ajar* has consoled and uplifted many thousands of those who mourn. It was written by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (after 1888, Mrs. Herbert D. Ward), who was born at Andover, Massachusetts, 1844, the daughter of Professor Austin Phelps of Andover Theological Seminary, from whom the daughter derived many of her liberal opinions.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward is the author of more than thirty books, at least two of them volumes of poems, and has been a frequent contributor to daily and weekly journals. Her best work was in the popular and influential *Gates Ajar*, in *The Story of Avis*, and in *A Singular Life*. She has written also many short-stories. One of her best is *Loveliness*, the story of a University professor's little daughter, who was lame and lovely, and her small dog, which was lost and later found in the dissecting laboratory of the University. *The Madonna of the Tubs* and *The Supply at St. Agatha's* have been even more popular than *Loveliness*.

31. Frances Hodgson Burnett. — From the manufacturing city of Manchester, England, to the mountain ridges of East Tennessee is a long way for a widowed mother to bring a family of small children, but that was done by the mother of Frances Hodgson, in 1866. Frances Hodgson was then but "a slip of a girl," having been born in 1849. She was already dreaming dreams and seeing visions, and soon began to contribute to magazines. Miss Hodgson was married in 1873 to Dr. Burnett, of Knoxville, Tennessee, who later took his family to the city of Washington. Mrs. Burnett lived in the capital city until 1898; since then she has resided in England.

Frances Hodgson Burnett has written many novels and short-stories. With many readers the favorite novel has been *That Lass o' Lowrie's* (1877), the love story of a factory girl in the county of Lancashire, England. This was her first success. It is fanciful in the thread of its plot, but

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all its incidents are based upon the author's careful observation of real people, and the book is written in a style of great charm. Many stories followed, some of American, some of English, and some of Spanish life. Several are for children, among them the stories in a book entitled *Sara Crewe, and Other Stories*, and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. *Sara Crewe*, the story of an orphan girl whose sorrows are turned to joys by "fairy fortune," is now known to many more than read books, for it has become popular upon the motion-picture screen.

It was natural that Mrs. Burnett should think of bringing an American boy into contact with English aristocratic life, as she was born in England, and, having lived in America, found elements of nobility in our democratic society. This contact she portrayed in *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. From the moment the book began to appear, in its first serial number in *St. Nicholas* magazine, in 1886, it has been loved by children. The adult reader is often prone to find *Fauntleroy* "splendidly null," for he is evidently the author's ideal of what a boy ought to be rather than what he is, or perhaps can be! Yet even these adults never fail to admire the perfect art with which Mrs. Burnett has built up the plan of the story and filled in its details.

32. Short-story Writers. — The novels of Edward Everett Hale, Francis R. Stockton, Thomas Nelson Page, Richard M. Johnston, Mary N. Murfree, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and Sara Orne Jewett cannot be dismissed with the verdict that as literature they are of only transient importance. Yet the novels are so far surpassed by the short-stories of the same writers that their chief distinction derives from the identity of authorship.

33. Edward Everett Hale, a minister of religion, philanthropist, patriot, and chaplain of the United States Senate, is not popularly thought of as a voluminous writer, yet he actually wrote and published more than forty books, among

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them a half-dozen and more novels. Three novels written during the seventies, *Ten Times One are Ten*, *In His Name*, and *Philip Nolan's Friends*, although moderate achievements if judged at this distance, yet were known, admired, and loved in tens of thousands of American homes for at least a generation. Two of Hale's short-stories, *My Double, and How He Undid Me*, and *The Man Without a Country*, the first an example of Dr. Hale's whimsical humor, and the second "the best sermon on patriotism ever written," will keep his memory alive. Few writers have had a more intense, yet sane, moral enthusiasm than Edward Everett Hale.

Edward Everett Hale

34. Frank R. Stockton (as he is generally known, though his first name was Francis) was a medical student, then a wood-engraver, then a journalist. He wrote several novels, in his time amusing everybody with the tale of *Rudder Grange*, which is rather a series of essays than a novel, although a slight thread of story holds its chapters together. *The Late Mrs. Null* is a better novel, bright and entertaining in its dialogue, good in its representation of local color, well plotted, and with characters carefully drawn. However, it lacks the energy of his short-stories. Still, energy cannot be said to be the thing that makes his briefer stories most distinctive; it is their originality. Stockton is one of the most original writers, in ingenuity of plot and in drollery, that America has produced. His plots are always logical,

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yet are filled with the most absurd incongruities, and almost always end in surprise. No description can show their originality; they must be read. *The Lady or the Tiger* seems to have immortalized its author. It is an "endless" story whose actual end gives promise of forever puzzling every inquirer into the mystery of "what a woman will do." A yarn is told of Stockton that at a luncheon in New York City, his hostess served ice cream in two moulds, one of a lady, the other of a tiger, hoping thus to entrap the author into revealing his solution of the mystery. But when Stockton was asked which he would take, the lady or the tiger, his reply was "Both, Madam!" *The Transferred Ghost* and *A Tale of Negative Gravity*, as amusing as they are ingenious, are but little below *The Lady or the Tiger* in uniqueness of situation and in skillful use of simple, straightforward, rapidly moving English.

Frank R. Stockton

35. Charles Egbert Craddock. — We have found Miss Alcott a pioneer in new aspects of children's books, and Edward Eggleston a pioneer in the opening up of the Middle West to fiction. Another pioneer now engages our attention. Miss Mary Noailles Murfree, whose *nom de plume* was Charles Egbert Craddock, was concerned with the lives of a type of people entirely new to literature. As a child, Mary N. Murfree lived among the mountains of Tennessee, but at the close of the Civil War, which had made the family poor, she removed to St. Louis. Miss Murfree's list of novels is long. The best known of them is *The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains*, written in 1885. Her short-stories,

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however, and especially those in the volume entitled *In the Tennessee Mountains* (1884), are of most worth. Grace, simplicity, penetration, unusual description of natural scenes, and depth of sympathy for humankind are in these stories. She has seen into the heart of things, especially into the heart of uncultivated mankind and of wild, free nature, and has recorded the pathos and the spiritual beauty which shines through all. Hers was a choice mind, strong, cultivated, and imaginative, but with profound feeling for the elemental, the primitive, the natural, the real, unspoiled by convention and artificial living. "The Star in the Valley" and "Drifting Down Lost Creek," in the volume of short-stories just mentioned, have an appreciative library audience, not only among those who welcome anything distinctively American, but also among those who enjoy dialect, local color, and effective background found anywhere.

36. Richard Malcolm Johnston, the son of a Georgia planter, and himself first a lawyer, later a professor in the State University of Maryland, and still later head of boys' schools in Georgia and Maryland, has written over eighty stories, long and short. The best of these are in the *Georgia Sketches*, published in 1864, and in *Dukesborough Tales* (1874). Professor (and Colonel) Johnston is the faithful historian of the "crackers," or poor white people, of middle Georgia. Although his stories are loosely plotted and often illogical in sequence, they are replete with a sense for the picturesqueness and the nobility which may be found even in the most unpromising characters. Johnston had a fine artistic perception, and was faithful to nature as it is in man and the outer world, though his tales proved faulty in construction. His insight into the lives of men was marvelous, and his character sketches have the "magic touch of reality."

37. Thomas Bailey Aldrich had the good fortune to be born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in the days when the old port was still full of the romance and mystery of the

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ocean, not because its ocean-going trade was keeping up, but because the place was still haunted by old sailors who had seen sights and could tell tales. For some years, while a very young child, Aldrich lived in New Orleans, but was brought back to Portsmouth for his schooling. His main business during the mature years of his life was the occupying of several editorial positions, the most important being head of the *Atlantic Monthly* staff. Of his novels, the better ones are *Prudence Palfrey* (1874), and *The Stillwater Tragedy* (1880). The first is a novel of the old-fashioned sort, dependent for its interest upon the working of incidents into a plot practically impossible in actual life and yet so written as to be quite plausible in a book. It is a long short-story, or a novelette, rather than a novel. *The Stillwater Tragedy* is a story of life in a New England manufacturing town. The characters are more complex than in *Prudence Palfrey*, and many of the situations are dramatic. In all of Aldrich's prose work there is a personal style which is impossible to describe but which makes it easy to identify.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Aldrich's short-stories and poems will endure longer than his novels. His poems will be taken up for consideration later in this chapter. The first in quality of his short-stories are included in the one volume entitled *Marjory Daw, and Other Stories*. "Marjory Daw" is the best of all short-stories written in its form, — that is, told solely by means of correspondence through letters and telegrams. The sur-

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prise at its conclusion, and the surprise at the conclusion of "A Struggle for Life," another story in the same volume, are among the cleverest bits of artful concealment in fiction. Aldrich is less quaint and less whimsical than Stockton, but his style is more polished. He dealt with trivialities, but infused them with his personality and thus made them delightful. We may call him the master of surprising and humorous situation. Of American writers of the short-story he is most like Daudet, the prince of French authors of the same literary type.

38. Sarah Orne Jewett. — Despite the fact that Edward Everett Hale and Thomas Bailey Aldrich were New Englanders, it remained for three women writers to present in short-story form portraits of actual New England people. Dr. Hale's *The Man Without a Country* belongs to the literature of the nation, and Aldrich's stories belong to the brood of fairy tales resident anywhere; but three women, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman, and Alice Brown, have written stories American enough, yet peculiarly of New England. Mrs. Freeman and Miss Brown belong to our day, but Miss Jewett's work was of the day of Hale and Stockton and Aldrich. Her work is full of kindly humor, healthful and sympathetic in its attitude to life, and powerful in its studies of New England character.

Sarah Orne Jewett

Miss Jewett's birthplace was Berwick, Maine, and the year of her birth 1849. Berwick is only a little way from

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Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where Aldrich was born. Miss Jewett's father, though a village doctor, was a man of wide culture and strong literary tastes. His advice to his daughter when she began to write was, "Don't try to write *about* people and things; tell of them as they are." She felt that her writing was a mission. Her own words are, "When I was, perhaps, fifteen, the first city boarders began to make their appearance near Berwick; and they so misunderstood the country people, and made such game of their peculiarities, that I was fired with indignation. I determined to teach the world that country people were not the awkward, ignorant set that these persons seemed to think. I wanted the world to know their grand, simple lives; and so far as I had a mission, when I first began to write, I think that was it."

Miss Jewett's best novels are *The Country Doctor* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, the latter more successful in character studies than the former, though not so widely popular. *Deephaven*, a remarkable little book portraying old sea-dogs and other denizens of a decayed New England port, has had high critical approval, and is full of leisurely and at times vivid charm to the experienced reader, but with the average youthful reader it drags heavily for full half its length. Among her short-stories, three stand out prominently: the idyllic sketch called "A White Heron," the rather grim but gossipy "Miss Tempy's Watchers," and the humorous bit of character writing entitled "A Winter Courtship." These short-stories will be read as long as interest in the coast towns and characters of the older New England continues to attract the book-lover and the lover of youth and love and happiness. Miss Jewett once said that she missed "a certain logical directness" in her writing, due to not having had training at good schools. But we do not miss this; and even if we were hunting for logical development in her stories we should forget our quest in the lively

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interest excited by the quaint peculiarities of her character studies.

39. Francis Bret Harte. — During this period from 1861 to 1890 began the work of three really great short-story writers, the greatest since Hawthorne and Poe. They are Henry James, George Washington Cable, and Francis Bret Harte. The short-stories of James and Cable we have already dealt with in connection with their work as novelists. Bret Harte wrote one book which he dubbed a novel, *Gabriel Conroy*, though in it he fails to sustain interest, the book being rather a bundle of impressions than a well-organized long story.

Bret Harte

Bret Harte, born at Albany, New York, 1839, had wandered from his childhood home to California during the days of the gold fever. There he had taught school, mined, set type, and edited a magazine, until fame came and welcomed him east again and even to Great Britain, where he lived many years, serving part of the time as United States consul. He died there in 1902. A score of short-stories and novelettes have placed him in the front rank of authors of short prose fiction. He wrote more than this score, but that many, at least, will survive the assaults of time.

Bret Harte wrote also some notable poems, such as the often quoted *John Burns at Gettysburg*, *The Society upon the Stanislaus*, and *How are You, Sanitary?* — also the exquisite little poetic idyll called *Battle Bunny*, the well-known *Jim*, *Plain Language from Truthful James*, *To a Pliocene Skull*, and that inimitable dialect ballad called *Dow's Flat*.

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Thirty years ago everybody was taking delight in his California verse, and line after line was on every tongue. To name Bret Harte anywhere was always to evoke a smile. The public fancy was caught and tickled by numerous passages, such as the one describing the disaster which befell a certain gentleman when

> A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen,
> And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,
> And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

Bret Harte found new rich material in the life of the Far West, and used it with a knowledge of the locality, a keenness of characterization, a masterly hand at composition, and a fastidiousness over words which have been the despair of those who long for like success and fame in the same field. Some of his most masterly work in the short-story form was related to child-life, as *Wan Lee*, *The Story of M'liss*, and *Baby Sylvester*, the last named character being a precocious bear cub. *Miggles* and *Tennessee's Partner* were in their detail sympathetically truthful pictures of the distinctly individual life found in California, but so far as the general course of events is concerned they were truthful to Bret Harte's imaginative observation and not to any life actually lived within the geographical metes and bounds of California or anywhere else. Bret Harte liked to lay hold of a strong situation with his imagination, then bend every word and every incident to the emphasis of that situation in such way as to bring about a perfect unity of impression from the whole story. Undoubtedly he found in the mining camps of the Golden West many novel characters, but he made literature out of them, not sociology and not history; he idealized both the individual and the typical traits he discovered, — unquestionably he exaggerated not a little. But the stories are all native; and the person who can read *Tennessee's Partner* or the two greater stories, *The Luck of*

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Roaring Camp and *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, without becoming spell-bound, must be a strange sort of human creature. The reader of this story receives the deepest impressions of transcendent splendor in the background of mighty Sierras, of the beauty of personal sacrifice, and of the fathomless pathos to be discerned in even the dregs of human society.

40. Joel Chandler Harris.—The negro folk-lore of America has found its best expression in the work of Joel Chandler Harris, a member of the staff of the *Atlanta Constitution* and a writer of highly original force. *Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings* and *Nights with Uncle Remus* are books filled with the spirit of primitive man's experience with nature. These tales are of widely varying *origin*, some coming originally from east India, some probably from the island of Ceylon, and possibly some from the fairy tales of North American Indians. While the Uncle Remus stories as Harris related them are not of the literary quality of *Æsop's Fables* or of the tenth century *Reynard the Fox*, yet they are among the world's richest treasures for the mind of the child and of the adult who has retained his sympathy with all created things.

Joel Chandler Harris

Writers of Verse

The giants of the pre-Civil War days, with the exception of Poe, survived into the era of national expansion. They were Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell. The less impressive Bayard Taylor also survived; in 1872 he

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wrote his overambitious poetic drama, *The Masque of the Gods*. But there were new men of power, Richard Henry Stoddard, Edmund Clarence Stedman, and Richard Watson Gilder, of New York; Thomas Bailey Aldrich, of Boston; Edward Rowland Sill and Joaquin Miller, of California, though these two were of less importance; Francis Orrery Ticknor, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Henry Timrod, and Sidney Lanier, of the South; Eugene Field, of the Middle West; and Walt Whitman, of New Jersey, or shall we say of the United States!

41. Richard Henry Stoddard. — Three New York poets engage our attention at this point, Richard Henry Stoddard, Edmund Clarence Stedman, and Richard Watson Gilder. R. H. Stoddard was not a native of New York, but was born at Hingham, Massachusetts, July 2, 1825. In 1835, when his father, a sea-captain, died, Stoddard was taken by his mother to New York City. His life from that time on (he died in 1903) was closely identified with that of the metropolis. He was almost entirely self-educated, largely by reading the best English poets with interest and care. He clerked in the New York Customs House (obtaining the position upon the recommendation of Hawthorne) from 1853 to 1870, writing much meanwhile. He worked at various tasks until 1879, when he began to give himself wholly to literature. What scanty living he earned from 1879 on was by the sale of his prose essays and editorial writings; but it is through his poems that he will live. A complete edition of the poems, including the contents of at least four previously published small volumes, was issued in 1880. Most of his poetry written after this edition is included in *The Lion's Cub, with Other Poems*, published in 1890.

These poems are notable for the passionate love of beauty which they reveal, for the prodigality of their fancy, and for a diction which shows that Stoddard was imitative of Keats

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in his choice and use of words. The poem entitled *Abraham Lincoln: a Horatian Ode*, first in quality of all his work, is generally considered one of the best poems written upon Lincoln since Lowell's *Harvard Commemoration Ode*. To be sure, this is the opinion of those versed in the craft and lore of poetry, rather than of the people generally. There is in the poetry of Stoddard much of the undertones of the sea near which he was born and which he continued to love, much of the haunting mystery that so often fills the verse of those who have lived with the spirit of the sea.

42. Edmund Clarence Stedman was a successful writer about poetry as well as of poetry. Like Stoddard, he was a New Englander. He was born at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1833, but became a rover, — a war correspondent from 1861 to 1863, — then an assistant to Lincoln's Attorney-General, Edward Bates. From 1869 to 1900 he was an active member of the New York Stock Exchange and an influential man among financiers. But literature was his greatest enjoyment. He lectured at various Universities upon *The Nature and Elements of Poetry*, the lectures being later published in book form. He was the author of a very valuable volume of essays called *Poets of America*. He edited a *Library of American Literature*, which is not of much value; and collected and published *An American Anthology* and *A Victorian Anthology*, both of which are without equals in their field. Stedman was, in the main, a judicial, thoughtful, experienced critic.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Edmund Clarence Stedman

In his verse, however, Stedman speaks his best. His

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poetry is better than his conception of poetry. He defined poetry as "rhythmical, imaginative language, expressing the emotion, taste, thought, passion, and insight of the human soul." This is a very broad definition, lacking however the fervidness it might have if it were more concretely stated. But his poetry does not lack fervor. He was the author of charming children's verses, as well as of poems for the adult. He wrote one romance in verse, *Alice of Monmouth*, and many other poems, chiefly lyrical, most of which are attractive as much for their freshness of spirit as for their conscientious workmanship. "A new land," said he, "calls for a new song." Therefore we should expect freshness of atmosphere from Stedman's verse. We get it. A few lines from Part XI of *Alice of Monmouth* will illustrate the ringing nature of his war-time songs:

Our good steeds snuff the evening air,
Our pulses with their purpose tingle;
The foeman's fires are twinkling there;
He leaps to hear our sabres jingle!
HALT!
Each carbine sends its whizzing ball:
Now, cling! clang! forward all,
Into the fight!

The fanciful humor of *Pan in Wall Street*, drawn from his contact with business, literature, and nature, too, has made this poem a favorite, though one hesitates to call it his best.

43. Richard Watson Gilder (1844–1909) was for many years editor of *The Century Magazine*. More than any other man he was the maker of the first-class modern magazine. He was also a social and political reformer of eminent influence. And he was a poet. His poems fill several small volumes. They are not read widely; perhaps their readers are only those who appreciate highly finished verse. Often his poetry has much of singing quality, and occasionally is

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strongly passionate, though usually with the passion of the intellect, not of the heart. His *I Count My Times by Times That I Meet Thee* is irrefutable proof that Gilder could be deeply passionate at heart, not a writer of lines of cold beauty only. His *On the Life-Mask of Abraham Lincoln* is one of the few poems equal to the task of placing proper value upon the greatness of Lincoln. *The Sonnet* is not Gilder's finest poem, but it is one of his finest attempts in either prose or verse to describe that most difficult form of verse, which it illustrates as well as describes, —

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Richard Watson Gilder

What is a sonnet? 'Tis the pearly shell
  That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea;
  A precious jewel carved most curiously;
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
  From a great poet's hidden ecstasy;
  A two-edged sword, a star, a song, — ah me!
Sometimes a heavy-tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath,
  The solemn organ whereon Milton played,
    And the clear glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls;
A sea this is, — beware who ventureth!
  For like a fiord the narrow floor is laid
    Mid-ocean deep to the sheer mountain walls.

Gilder was especially skillful in his poems upon music. For all who have intelligent interest in music the little volume called *A Book of Music* (1906) has enduring charm.

44. Francis Orrery Ticknor. — From the days when the great conflict broke out between the North and the South until 1890 the South had many poets. Francis Orrery

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Ticknor, a physician of Columbus, Georgia, will be known as long as Tennessee's part in the conflict is known, because of the beautiful and touching story celebrating the chief character in *Little Giffen*. The opening and closing stanzas are

> Out of the focal and foremost fire,
> Out of the hospital walls as dire;
> Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene,
> (Eighteenth battle, and *he* sixteen!)
> Spectre! such as you seldom see,
> Little Giffen, of Tennessee.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I sometimes fancy that, were I king
> Of the princely Knights of the Golden Ring,
> With the song of the minstrel in mine ear,
> And the tender legend that trembles here,
> I'd give the best on his bended knee,
> The whitest soul of my chivalry,
> For "Little Giffen," of Tennessee.

45. Paul Hamilton Hayne. — The poems of Ticknor were edited by Paul Hamilton Hayne, who was much the more distinguished poet of the two. Hayne, nephew of the orator and statesman Robert Young Hayne, was born in 1830 at Charleston, South Carolina. He became a lawyer, colonel in the Confederate army, editor, and man of letters known and honored abroad as well as at home. A complete edition of Hayne's poems appeared in 1882, four years previous to his death. While Hayne, in his lyrics of Southern life during war-time and after, was perhaps the most representative poet of the South, it is in his poems interpreting Southern out-of-door nature that he excels, and it is through them that he has secured the more general hearing. *Aspects of the Pines* is the gem of them all.

46. Henry Timrod; Irwin Russell. — The martial lyrics of Henry Timrod should not be overlooked, especially his *Carolina*, and the *Ode* on the Confederate dead which was

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set to music and sung at Magnolia Cemetery in 1867. Nor should neglect attend the memory of that lover of nature and of rare books, Irwin Russell, who before his death in 1878, at the age of only twenty-five, had become, according to the experts Joel Chandler Harris and Thomas Nelson Page, the pioneer delineator of negro character. Russell's poems in negro dialect, notably *Christmas Night in the Quarters*, are still among the best that present the pathos, humor, and picturesqueness of the southern negro.

47. Sidney Lanier. — It is Sidney Lanier, however, to whom all minds turn as the one poet, next to Poe, of whom the South may justly be most proud. He was born at Macon, Georgia, in 1842, was graduated from Oglethorpe College, became a Confederate soldier, after the war made his living by his music, and finally filled most acceptably a lectureship in English literature at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. He had delicate health, and died at the age of thirty-nine. Lanier was well read in the law, and was strongly interested in science as well as thoroughly informed in literature. He left several prose works, those of lasting value being the two entitled *The Science of English Verse* and *The English Novel, and the Principles of its Development.* Both of these books show their author's high intellectual powers, and are still not only read but studied.

Sidney Lanier

The volume of Lanier's poems is slender, because of the brevity of his life; but it is a triumphant one, for it contains the *Ballad of the Trees and the Master*, *Corn*, *The Song*

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of the Chattahoochee, Tampa Robins, Sunrise, The Marshes of Glynn, and *The Symphony. The Trees and the Master* is one of the most frequently quoted of religious poems. *Corn* was "a vision of the South restored through agriculture." *The Song of the Chattahoochee* has melody as haunting as some of the melodies of Poe. *Sunrise,* though his death-bed poem, is the most joyous of them all. *Tampa Robins* is but one of the group of Lanier's poems which reveals a wide range of sympathy and insight into nature; of this group *The Marshes of Glynn* is foremost in resourcefulness of verse and in breadth of thought. *The Marshes of Glynn* is usually singled out as the surest of all his poems to live; but perhaps *The Symphony,* because it is more individual and original, will survive it, if indeed either of them is to perish. *The Symphony* voices Lanier's protest against the American materialism which was leaving so little room for the spiritual culture for which Lanier's heart was eagerly a-cry. Three lines give its key-note, —

> "O Trade! O Trade! Would thou wert dead!
> The Time needs heart — 'tis tired of head:
> We're all for love," the violins said.

48. Thomas Bailey Aldrich wrote the *Ballad of Babie Bell* before he was nineteen years of age, falling not immeasurably short of the youthful achievement of Bryant. This is the most generally known of his poems. It revealed the fineness of perception which is the characteristic above all others that was to distinguish his poetry. Aldrich put forth several volumes of verse, and in them is to be found some of the most representative work of the kind established in American literature by Longfellow and Lowell. Aldrich is a little more debonair than his predecessors. He is as conscientious a workman as Longfellow, but less powerful in thought than Lowell; kindred more, however, to Lowell in spirit.

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His *Spring in New England* is deemed by some the best of all Decoration Day odes. Incidentally, the shortest line in the following stanza is Aldrich himself! —

Hark! 'tis the bluebird's venturous strain
High on the old fringed elm at the gate —
Sweet-voiced, valiant on the swaying bough,
Alert, elate,
Dodging the fitful spits of snow,
New England's poet-laureate
Telling us Spring has come again!

Mercedes, a drama, was a success, for a short time, even in the theater. *Judith and Holofernes*, his longest poem, is a worthy effort in classic story-telling. *Friar Jerome's Beautiful Book*, a late work, exhibits Aldrich's strong, candid feeling and the high degree of his artistic subtlety.

49. Edward Rowland Sill, a native of Connecticut, born in 1841, a graduate of Yale University, and a professor of English Literature in the University of California from 1874 to 1882, wrote a few good prose essays, and a considerable volume of poems, the majority of which are quite personal, displaying their author's spirit in its innermost experience. While his early verse was not well disciplined in either thought or melody, yet from 1867 on his touch became more austere, firmer, clearer, richer. His nature was a pure and rich one, and he possessed a keen insight into the ethical values of life. One who reads Sill's *Summer Afternoon*, *Opportunity*, *Five Lives*, *The Fool's Prayer*, and *Truth at Last*, will assuredly read more from the same pen.

50. Joaquin Miller. — Just as over-enthusiastic and rather undiscriminating admirers decorated Irving as the American Addison, Cooper as the American Scott, and Whittier as the American Burns, so we had for a time, if we were to believe admirers, an "American Byron." His real name was Cincinnatus Hiner Miller (the second name nearly always misspelled as Heine), but residence upon the

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West Coast and a defense, during his practice of law, of a Mexican brigand named Joaquin Murietta, led him to substitute his client's first name for his own first and middle names. This was, no doubt, partly because he was beginning to be ambitious as a verse-writer, and the salable possibilities of poems written by "Cincinnatus Hiner" Anybody would be problematical. C. H. Miller was born in the region of the Wabash, Indiana, 1841. He had little schooling. His family soon removed to Oregon, and Miller lived in that state, and in Idaho, Colorado, and California. He was a miner, an express messenger, an editor of a newspaper, an Indian-fighter, a lawyer, and an author.

In 1870 Joaquin Miller's *Songs of the Sierras* was published in London, and immediately it took the British public by storm. Apparently his readers supposed these poems, "rhymed and versified tales of adventure" as most of them were, to be distinctively American; but the fact that those readers at once called him "the American Byron" was a denial of belief in a unique American character in the poems. It should have been obvious, as it now is to every one, that these verse-tales were told of characters transported from the pages of Byron and put into California surroundings and costumes. Miller was steeped in Byron, but lacked his originality and his artistic skill, and copied all his faults. Yet while there is much that is poor, very poor, verse in *Songs of the Sierras*, there is also a little of fine, beautiful verse. The same is true of *Songs of the Sunlands*, and in *Songs of the Mexican Seas*. All attractive titles, are they not? "The Isles of the Amazons," in *Songs of the Sun-lands*, is now almost universally considered his poem most difficult to find fault with, most easy to praise.

Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

51. "The Good Gray Poet." — All men are dreamers. When men dream greatly, they are called prophets by those

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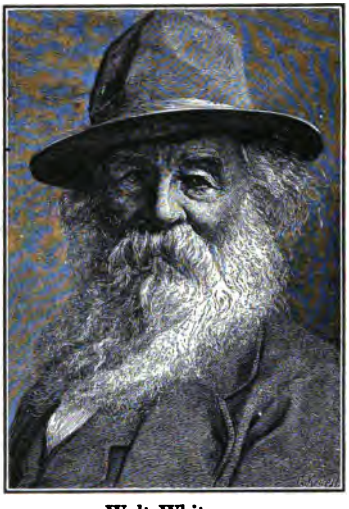
who do not dream and yet who like great dreams, and cranks by those who do not like them; but the average man is too little interested to listen to dreams at all. Thus it is with the public and Walter (or "Walt") Whitman. By a few he has been thought the great prophet of the people, the leader of all future poets, preëminently "the poet of Democracy." By a few others he has been despised as half-sham, and, in so far as sincere, either not worth consideration or unwholesome and immoral, with, perhaps, an occasional poem, highly exceptional, shining pure and serene amid all the muddiness or the pretense of the rest. As to the democracy, — while he may be a poet *of* democracy, he certainly has not been a poet *for* the democracy. "The people" do not read him. If he were the poet of and for democracy, he surely would be read by many of those who recently were fighting to make the world safe for democracy. But in camps as elsewhere he has been neglected by them. Is it another case of "despised and rejected" of his own? Of course, every school-child knows the threnody upon the death of Lincoln, — *O Captain! My Captain!* The gentle, plain, just, and resolute martyr called forth an immortal poem, proving that Whitman was a poet for all when occasion required. And almost every school-child knows *Hush'd be the Camps To-day.* Every one who reads verse at all knows *titles* of Whitman's poems, or parts of titles, — and such titles as *Out of the*



Walt Whitman

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Cradle Endlessly Rocking, and the title *When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd*, and perhaps part of the title *As I Sat Alone by Blue Ontario's Shore*, are masterpieces in themselves. But who has read any one of these three poems entire? Certainly not many except *students* of American verse.

That Whitman's art in writing titles advanced is evident, since in 1860 and again in 1867 the poem now bearing the title *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* was entitled "A Word Out of the Sea." Perhaps the present title is too good, for more than one "Whitmaniac" who has not read the poem has been betrayed into speaking of it as in celebration of an unending procession of babies! But the seventy-three lines in sections 3, 5, and 7 of this poem, containing the songs of the sea-bird, are among the greatest bits of music in words in all literature. The man who cannot read these lines, can read no poetry. The "Death Carol" in *President Lincoln's Burial Hymn* or, as it is usually called, *When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloom'd*, is very great poetry, poetry that will well stand the test of comparison with that of Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton. The human race will be braver, more sober but happier, when it can know, — not read only, — and intimately accept the spirit of those great lines. Yet those twenty-eight lines of the "Death Carol" are but one of the twenty parts of the poem.

52. "Reconciliation," one of the many poems in *Drum-Taps*, should be a possession of every member of the human race; humanity should be educated to the knowledge and the full, complete appreciation of this "Word over all, beautiful as the sky!" — for that is precisely what the poem is.

53. A Poet of Contrasts. — There are other excellent poems by Whitman besides those we have praised. There are also many which should never have been written, for they were not worth the effort. Emerson is frequently quoted as friend and approver of Whitman; and so he was, but Emerson in 1869 walked and talked an entire afternoon

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in an effort to dissuade Whitman from publishing parts of the third edition of *Leaves of Grass* on the plea that they were not fit for the public eye and ear. The majority of the poems of Whitman are not for the common people, but for the "over-civilized." Many of them are not poetry at all; many are too much filled with thought to be easily read by the average man of the democracy, and hence are not believed to be poetry, though they are; and many contain material which is the subject matter of science alone, not of poetry.

Much of Whitman's verse was written before 1861; but most that is of highest worth came after he had been softened and humanized in *spirit* through his experience of sacrifice and service in the hospitals of the Civil War. Whitman was a great poet who wrote a few great poems and many poor ones; who also wrote much verse that is not poetry at all. His prose works, such as *Democratic Vistas*, amply reward careful reading by the willing student, but do not appeal to the "average reader." He was a man who often thought strongly and beautifully and wrote accordingly.

BEST BOOKS ON THE ERA OF NATIONALISM

Old Cambridge, Thomas Wentworth Higginson. (The Macmillan Company.)

American Writers of To-day, — (to 1894). Henry C. Vedder. (Silver, Burdett, and Company.)

A Manual of American Literature, Theodore Stanton. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

The Hoosiers, Meredith Nicholson. (The Macmillan Company.)

Southern Writers, W. P. Trent. (The Macmillan Company.)

A History of American Literature, Walter C. Bronson. (D. C. Heath & Co.)

A History of American Literature Since 1870, Fred Lewis Pattee. (The Century Co.)

An American Anthology, Edmund Clarence Stedman. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

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CHAPTER VI

THE PRESENT DAY

(SINCE 1890)

The majority of those who are making the literature of America to-day are engaged in writing prose fiction, drama, or poetry. Yet there are numerous scholarly and influential historians, philosophers, and essayists whose work is contributing to the advancement of thought and life. If there has been any change in methods of composition since fifty years ago, it has been in the direction of simplicity, terseness, and elimination of ornament.

Writers of Prose

1. Historians. — Within the past thirty years many historians have flourished whose work will always be indispensable to the student of history. Among them have been John Fiske, Henry Adams, James Ford Rhodes, Edward Channing, John Bach McMaster, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Albert Bushnell Hart, Theodore Roosevelt, William Roscoe Thayer, and Woodrow Wilson. Of these perhaps John Fiske and Woodrow Wilson will be most highly considered by future historians of *literature*, with Henry Adams always commanding attention from the few.

2. John Fiske was born at Middletown, Connecticut, in 1842. From his youth he was distinguished as an eager reader and a serious thinker in both history and science. He soon began to display wide scholarship and diversified mental interests. One of his earlier books manifested also a gift for story-telling and a play of fancy. This book was

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entitled *Myths and Myth-makers*. It traced to their sources many popular superstitions, and legends based upon both fancy and fact. His *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* is an interpretation of the discoveries of Charles Darwin and a development of the thought of Herbert Spencer. *The Destiny of Man* and *The Idea of God* were also among Fiske's contributions to philosophic thought. The *Excursions of an Evolutionist* interestingly and convincingly presented his experience and thinking in the field which the title indicates. The *American Political Ideas* is among the best books which set forth the fundamental things in the history of American political life.

Fiske's most lasting work was done in the field of history proper, particularly by *The Discovery of America*, *The Beginnings of New England*, and *The Critical Period of American History*. Of these three, *The Discovery of America* is the ablest. It is not only an account of the voyages of Columbus, of his predecessors, and of those who soon followed him, but is also a summary of the old-world stories of a fabled western world, and a masterful description of the background of European civilization at the time of the discovery of this continent. In addition to the popularity accruing from these and other volumes, the work of Fiske as a university lecturer brought him much renown. He died July 4, 1901, a loss to popular philosophy, science, history, and literature.

John Fiske

3. Woodrow Wilson, professor in and subsequently president of Princeton University, Governor of New Jersey, and

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President of the United States for two terms, beginning in 1912, first attracted attention by his writings while he was teaching in Georgia. He has written one important book, *The State*, upon the theory of government, and others of less importance upon the same subject. The most valuable of his works consist of (1) a small volume entitled *Division and Reunion*, which treats of the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction, and (2) a series of five volumes called *A Narrative History of the United States*, containing in interesting narrative form, with thoughtful comment, the history of the American continent before the formation of the union, and then of the United States. The addresses and state papers which Wilson wrote during the World War are notable for their clearness, directness, and energy. An early volume entitled *Mere Literature and Other Essays* had already given artistic promise which these state papers amply fulfilled.

Photo by Edmonston, Washington, D. C.
Woodrow Wilson

4. Henry Adams was an accomplished historian. The story of himself and of the politics of his time, embodied in *The Education of Henry Adams* more than his histories, has made him earnestly read by the layman.

5. Magazines and Newspapers. — Of general essayists to-day, the number is almost beyond reckoning, but the talents of most of them have found employment in writing

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chiefly for the periodical press. The greater part of the content of periodicals is doomed to brief life and fame, though certain of a large immediate circulation. Journalism in America, including daily, weekly, monthly, and other serial publications, at the beginning of the twentieth century, had attained the phenomenal quantity of eight billions of copies of periodicals for twelve months, with a market value of two hundred and twenty-five millions of dollars. The subsequent twenty years have seen a rapidity in increase of volume almost beyond belief. It has been estimated that two hundred and fifty millions of dollars are now spent annually in the United States for newspapers alone. The papers pour from the press in unending succession, in editions that are enormous. New York city, as might be expected from its size, location, and great wealth, has drawn to it many of the most ambitious publishers and editors. *The Sun* (founded in 1833, though a more important date to remember is 1868, when Charles A. Dana became editor and manager of this paper), *The Evening Post*, *The Tribune*, *The Times*, and *The World* are unsurpassed for enterprise and influence. Opinions vary as to their relative merits, for a newspaper becomes a favorite with a reader through long association. *The Times* gives more attention to literature than many of the others, and at present contains perhaps the most thoughtfully written editorials. *The Boston Transcript*, *The Springfield Republican*, *The Kansas City Star*, and *The Chicago Tribune* are now generally considered among the most notable of the newspapers published outside the metropolis. Certainly the weekly edition of the *Springfield Republican* is of inestimable value to the busy reader.

The eighteenth century saw the rise and decay of a score of good monthly magazines, from the early ventures of Franklin to those of Charles Brockden Brown. During the first half of the nineteenth century nearly all the foremost

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thinkers and authors were associated with magazines, either as editors or as contributors. Among the editors were Washington Irving, Richard Henry Dana, Sr., George P. Morris, Samuel Woodworth, Nathaniel P. Willis, William Cullen Bryant, Charles Fenno Hoffman, Edgar Allan Poe, George R. Graham, George Ripley, Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Park Benjamin, and Mrs. Caroline M. Kirkland. The contributors included nearly all the prominent men whose names find mention in American history from 1800 to 1850. But only one or two of the magazines of that half-century have survived, the most important being the *North American Review*, founded in 1815 and now the oldest of all our greater periodicals.

In 1850 *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* was established. This was quickly followed by *Putnam's Monthly Magazine* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. Between 1868 and 1895 the following popular monthlies were established: *Lippincott's Magazine*, *The Overland Monthly*, *The Century Magazine*, *Scribner's Magazine*, *The Forum*, *The Cosmopolitan*, *The Arena*, *Munsey's Magazine*, *McClure's Magazine*, and *The Bookman*. The finest contributions have been made to *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *The Century*, and *Scribner's*, though the connection of Bret Harte with *The Overland Monthly* lifted that California magazine to a position which requires its mention in the annals of literature.

6. Critical Weeklies. — *The Nation*, a weekly, *The Dial*, for many years a monthly, but now issued weekly, are among the publications devoted to reviews and literary criticism. A recently founded review, *The New Republic*, came at once into favor, especially among those who desired a change from the emphatic certainties of *The Nation*. But the newer magazine although well written seems to find it difficult to avoid the beaten path. An even more recently initiated venture is the conservative *Review*, in 1921 merged with *The Independent*.

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7. The Essayists. — Amid the variety and quantity of publications the essayist has almost lost himself; in writing for the daily newspaper he speaks chiefly for the moment and to the passing crowd, and in writing for the magazines he is often doing nothing more than trying himself out. If, however, his magazine contributions prove successful, they are likely to appear later in book form.

Among the essayists of this day, a few have stood forth prominently, — William Dean Howells, F. Marion Crawford,

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New York Public Library

Frank Norris, Samuel McChord Crothers, James Huneker, Agnes Repplier, Paul Elmer More, George Edward Woodberry, perhaps better known as a poet, and Lafcadio Hearn. We can hardly fail to include John Burroughs among the essayists of our day, though his better books were all published before 1890. Since that date, however, his works include fourteen titles, one of them a volume of verse. Howells also belongs to a generation older than the present, though his *Criticism and Fiction* was published as late as 1895. F. Marion Crawford's little book called *The Novel — What It Is* may certainly be termed a classic in the field of inquiry concerning the art of the novel. Frank Norris's

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The Responsibilities of a Novelist will not fail to stimulate every reader, if he is awake to what is important and original in criticism. Mr. James Huneker, author of more than a dozen books appreciative and otherwise critical, who died early in 1921, was one of the most fearlessly independent thinkers of the present day. There are few phases of art which have escaped his penetrative analysis, but he will not hold the hasty reader. *Ivory Apes and Peacocks* is representative of his work. Among the younger critical essayists, fame is being achieved by Robert Cortes Holliday and Christopher Morley.

8. **Samuel McChord Crothers** has published several books whose material has been collected from his many magazine articles. *The Gentle Reader* surpasses the rest; it has made an epoch in many a young student's reading life. The work of Mr. Crothers is uneven in quality, but the greater part of it is distinctive for unbroken charm, humor, and uplifting power.

9. **Agnes Repplier,** born in Philadelphia of French parentage, exhibits much of the individual temperament which makes the powerful writer. She is interesting for the note of protest which runs through all her work, a dissent from widely accepted modern views of things. She is keenly alive to all that is going on in the world of to-day, and not so hostile to its life as critical of its easygoing opinions. Her essays may be found in almost every first-class magazine, where they are eagerly sought by the cultivated reader. From *Books and Men*, published in 1888, to *Points of Friction*, 1920, there are more than a dozen books, all of them pleasant, witty, and thoughtful.

10. **Paul Elmer More.** — A more scientific, more widely informed, and more philosophic critic than Miss Repplier is Paul Elmer More, formerly a teacher and later on the editorial staff of *The Nation*. His *Shelburne Essays*, in several volumes, represent the best that is known and thought to-

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day in the way of a steadfast spiritual interpretation of what men of letters have been doing in the world. He is interested in artistic form, and in all elements of natural beauty found in books; but he is interested even more in the intellectual processes which are inspired and guided by ethical and religious mood.

11. Lafcadio Hearn must be accorded, even in so brief a history as this, more extended treatment than his contemporaries among American essayists, for his creative imagination sets him as an artist far above them all. His origin was not American. He was born in 1850 upon one of the Greek islands. His father was an Englishman, his mother a Greek. He was educated in England, but removed to America and became a journalist at Cincinnati, then at New Orleans, later a teacher, and finally an extensive traveler. Hearn's last years were spent in Japan. He is best known as a writer upon topics connected with that country, where he became a Japanese citizen, married a Japanese woman, and upon his death in 1904 was buried with full Buddhist rites, the first foreign-born citizen to be thus recognized in the island empire.

Several of Hearn's books were published before the period covered in this chapter, among them *Stray Leaves from Strange Literatures*, *Some Chinese Ghosts*, and *Chita*. The first two show their author's faculty for assimilating foreign ideas and stamping them with his own imagery and thought. *Stray Leaves* reveals in particular his early interest in things Egyptian, Indian, Finnish, and Hebrew. *Some Chinese Ghosts* retells the content of certain bits of Chinese literature. Comprehension of and sympathy with the elusive mystery of the Orient are here both strong and delicate; the work is original, too, as gems cut and reset are counted original with the lapidary. *Chita: A Memory of Last Island* is a story of the sea and of the hurricane which destroyed a Caribbean Sea island resort of wealthy citizens

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of New Orleans, a story of love and misery, a tragic story of how

> Nature whistled with all her winds,
> Did as she pleased, and went her way.

In descriptive power no other book by Hearn excels *Chita*. Others are more thoughtful, as they were more mature.

Just before his death, Lafcadio Hearn read the printer's proofs for the most thoughtful of his books, *Japan, an Interpretation*. Three others, however, are more often read, — *Kotto, Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, and *Kokoro*. The word "Kokoro," as the sub-title, "*Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life*," indicates, means something equivalent to "heart," as when we speak of "the heart of things." This book contains several brief essays, each complete in itself, and is replete with ideas somewhat unusual to the Western mind. Some of the essays are extraordinary both for thought and for artistic power and grace; among these are "By Force of Karma," "The Idea of Preexistence," and "The Genius of Japanese Civilization." The last is the most interesting to one who has been an observer of the recent entrance of Japan into the sphere of world-activity. In 1917 was brought out an edition of Hearn's lectures delivered at a Japanese University, and entitled *Life and Literature*. This book is an excellent introduction to the thought and work of Hearn. The student of literature will be interested to find style defined here as character, and literature, in so far as it is a fine art, as the best expression of the most intimate experience.

Hearn was an unusual artist in words. Restrained in representing his thought, suggesting rather than setting it out in systematic detail, subtle in the tendency of his suggestions, graceful and deft in descriptive touch, he is sure of bringing back again and again to his books any intelligent reader who once dips into them. The thought of Hearn echoes in one's mind, like the music of a bell, and moves one

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with its meanings. It is disturbing, too, to some traditional ideas of the Occidental mind concerning things we have deemed of importance. His most imposing thinking has been exerted upon the effort to fuse the spirit of Western evolutional science with the Indian Buddhism which had already been fused with, or had grafted itself upon, the artistic sense of Japan. A strange compound he makes, but a most modern one. The beauty of his language is partly due to its strange, new meaning, and to the fact that it is characterized, like the Japanese language, by an aversion to saying all and leaving nothing to the reader's imagination. Mingled with the savor and flavor of Hearn's Western experience, all this is intensely modern, and no doubt will be more and more read as time advances.

12. American Philosophy has tended in our day to expend its interest upon practical psychology and educational problems rather than upon the problems of the origin and nature and destiny of the universe, or what is called metaphysics. The average man ignores the old claim of philosophy to be the science of the sciences, and desires to know what the philosopher can do to help him get on in the world. The philosopher of to-day seems to desire to meet this demand as fully as he can, though not entirely neglectful of the old searchings after the truth about first and fundamental things; hence the prevailing character of the labors of John Dewey, Borden Parker Bowne, Josiah Royce, and William James.

13. Three who are Famous. — John Dewey stands among the foremost of the "intellectuals" of the present day in America. His studies in educational theory and in social conditions have led to a number of thoughtful volumes, all lacking, however, in warmth and fervor and therefore having little appeal to the average reader. Perhaps his volume *How We Think* would furnish a satisfactory bowing acquaintance with the general nature of his work. Other

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works, such as *Democracy and Education*, are molding the thought of modern education and slowly changing the character of the schools of America. Professor Bowne's *Principles of Ethics* falls within the present period, having been published in 1892, and is worthy of careful perusal by the student of the thought of the United States, as are his earlier works upon psychological theory, upon the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, upon theism, and upon metaphysics. Professor Royce, a Californian, who gave his attention largely to popularizing the thought of Hegel, was a much more free and fresh and vigorous author than either Dewey or Bowne, even though he wrote more upon the theoretical aspects of man's thought upon the world and man than upon the practical aspects of man's life. *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, *The Conception of God*, *Studies of Good and Evil*, *The Conception of Immortality*, and *The World and the Individual*, all published between 1892 and 1901, are notable books of a notable thinker.

14. William James. — But it is William James who has held the advantage over his fellow philosophers, because of the clearness, simplicity, and audacity of his style. He has at times written of philosophical problems in almost the language of the man in the street. Perhaps he has occasionally thinned his thought by so doing, but his influence in both America and Europe seems as yet to have been all the more effective for this freshness and even carelessness of style. Between 1890 and 1907 William James wrote *Principles of Psychology*, in two volumes, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, *Human Immortality*, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, *Pragmatism*, and many other books and articles. It has been recently asserted that Pragmatism and Prussianism are in the long run convertible terms, and, while this judgment is too harsh, yet it is true that great numbers of people have too readily surrendered, without thought, to James's way of thinking, — to

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the belief that the value of a thing depends wholly upon its working efficiency. But his books are very modern, and are eminently readable. No one has brought philosophy more closely down to earth than William James. The two volumes of his *Letters* recently issued show him again as "a psychologist who could write like a novelist."

15. George Santayana. — American universities have many able and original thinkers and expounders of philosophy among their professors. Whether they will take a place in the history of our literature does not yet appear. Perhaps the work of George Santayana should not be passed entirely by, especially his volumes upon *The Sense of Beauty* and *Reason in Art;* but he belongs with greater right to literature through his disclosing the "soul's invincible surmise" in a sonnet sequence. These sonnets are subdued in emotion, but are very nearly perfect in their technique, and are filled with thought, now elusive and again straightforwardly simple and appealing. After all, philosophy and poetry are not unallied.

16. Naturalists. — Many recent writers have attempted description and interpretation of the life of nature. Among them the fairest-seeming, so far as the grace of art is concerned, is John Muir. His *The Mountains of California* is a book bright with the beauty of the spirit of its author as well as with the grandeur and charm of its subject. Dallas Lore Sharp also in *A Watcher in the Woods* has presented the life of nature with keen and eager sympathy.

17. The Short-Story. — The story-tellers in the prose of our time may be considered as Short-Story Writers, Writers of Novelettes, and Novelists. If at first thought the classification of the novelette apart from the other two types of prose fiction seems unjustified, perhaps it may not seem entirely so when its discussion has been presented. The leading short-story writers since 1890 have been Henry Cuyler Bunner, Henry van Dyke, Hamlin Garland, Gertrude

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Atherton, Margaret Deland, Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman, Alice Brown, William Sydney Porter (O. Henry), James Oppenheim, and Thomas Nelson Page. Shall we include others? At what name should we then draw the line? These, at least, are names of writers concerning whose standing there can no longer be much controversy; but if we were to place with them Myra Kelly, Katherine Fullerton Gerould, Bruno Lessing, Joseph Lincoln, Stephen Whitman, Lloyd Osbourne, or even Jack London, there would be a definite demand from almost every reader of this page that this, or that, or another be added to the list of names of the enchanters. Each of those we have mentioned, as fairly certain of lasting fame, has been imitated, but each remains unequaled in his special field.

18. H. C. Bunner was for years editor of *Puck*, and his short-stories, most of them, are humorous in conception and in development of detail. He had the power of perfectly focusing the interest upon one situation, — which is the truly distinctive art of the modern short-story. It is doubtful whether any writer of short-stories ever has handled striking endings in a more masterly manner than did Bunner, unless it was the French writer Maupassant. And Bunner knew how few details were necessary to secure sufficient fixing of attention upon the point of the story. His stories are as American as any ever written; even the very free translations from the French are suffused with American spirit. Possibly *A Sisterly Scheme*, though light in conception, is as well constructed as any of his stories, and *Our Aromatic Uncle* as subtle as any.

19. Henry van Dyke has been a clergyman, a Princeton professor, and a diplomat in the foreign service of the United States. His writings are varied in kind and in subject matter, ranging through lyric poetry, literary drama, theology, and prose fiction. His publications fill a rather large shelf. Many of them are deficient in force and faulty in phrasal

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construction. But the short-stories in *The Blue Flower* and in *The Unknown Quantity* are quite worthy of the praise that the public has accorded them. The little tale entitled *The Story of the Other Wise Man* has, as its title suggests, a Biblical background, and is told with dignity and impressiveness. Though the style of van Dyke's prose is occasionally ruined with affectation, his work has had a wholesome effect, and at times has been found inspiring.

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Henry van Dyke

20. Hamlin Garland has contended that one should write of only what he knows well, and his practice has followed his requirement. Essays, novels, and short-stories have poured from his pen; but the short-stories best represent what he has seen and actively shared in. Hamlin Garland's early life was spent upon what was then the frontier, — in Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Dakota. He has written about these pioneer days in his autobiography, *A Son of the Middle Border*. His stories are of frontier life in that region, though not entirely of its poverty, its grimness, its dullness, its over-work. Some critics have found Garland's work leaden-hued and that alone; but such critics cannot have read very far into his books. His *Main-Traveled Roads* and *Other Main-Traveled Roads* contain quite enough that

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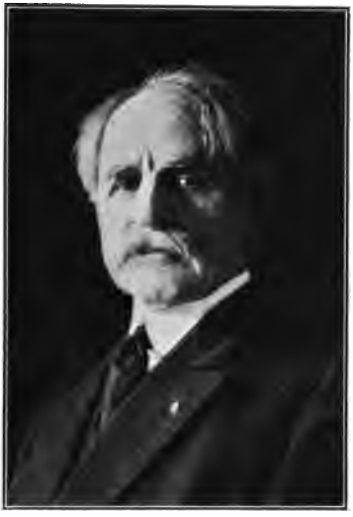
represents emptiness of spirit, weariness of living, almost hopeless melancholy, and ferocious toil, but there is also in them much of homely humor, and much of enjoyment of life. It is difficult to believe that one who thinks of Hamlin Garland as always somber and depressing can have read "Among the Corn-Rows," "The Creamery Man," "William Bacon's Man," or "Elder Pill, Preacher." Garland's work cannot be said to have in high degree the quality of literary elegance, but in the short-stories it has the quality of convincingness, and much of it is very entertaining.



Courtesy of The Macmillan Co.
Hamlin Garland

21. Gertrude Atherton is best known for her journalistic work and for her novels, especially *The Conqueror*, a story of Alexander Hamilton, but her short-stories of the life in the California of the days before its acquisition by the United States deserve a large and interested audience. The most unique of these stories are in the volume with the attractive title of *The Splendid Idle Forties*. Whether they accurately reflect the California of the old days does not matter, — Homer's *Iliad* does not accurately reflect the old days of Greece and the Troad, yet is none the less interesting and valuable.

22. Margaret Deland. — The short-stories (though some have called them novelettes) in Margaret Deland's *Old Chester Tales*, published in 1899, put their author upon a plane of favorable comparison with any writer of narrative

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of her time. A few of the characters in these stories, for example in "The Promises of Dorothea," are among the most attractive in American fiction. Amid so much of contemporary literature which leads to disquietude of mind and heart it is satisfying to read these wholesomely stimulating tales.

Courtesy Frederick A. Stokes Co.

Gertrude Atherton

23. Mary Wilkins Freeman. — "I think the Lord must have thought a good deal of common people," said President Lincoln, "he made so many of them." There are many common people in the stories of Mrs. Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman, nearly all of them New England women. Whether they are thought much of by their creator, she has not revealed, but they surely were thought much about. Mrs. Freeman is one of the very few good writers who can do their work without much revision, because she is careful to plan and think her stories through to smallest details before she pens them. In temperament Mrs. Freeman resembles Hawthorne, gloomy, brooding, though not quite morbid, more strongly affected even than he by the sordidness, the pathos, and the tragedy of the narrow, distorted life of the unintelligent among New England Puritans and their country-reared descendants. She is scrupulously exact in her workmanship, but her stories are lacking in the firmly knit structure of those of her master. Her stories are distinctly New England in setting, and limited almost exclusively to the vainly struggling, desperately suffering,

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Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Mary Wilkins Freeman

and, amid it all, unreasoning, characters of rural life. She does not display the frequent bitter hostility to the conditions of life surrounding village and country characters which is characteristic of Hamlin Garland in his stories of the Middle-West farming communities. Mrs. Freeman is more evenly somber than Garland, less willing to break forth into flashes of genial humor than he, — a Hamlin Garland in a Hawthorne environment, and, partly because of the environment, no doubt, a greater writer. The short-stories in *A New England Nun and Other Stories* (especially "The Little Maid at the Door" and "Evelina's Garden"), and in *The Wind in the Rose-Bush and Other Stories of the Supernatural* are among the most artistic and pathetic tales in American literature.

Alice Brown

24. Alice Brown. — One of New England's most successful story writers is Miss Alice Brown, — now of Boston, — though her birthplace and childhood home was in

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New Hampshire. She has written verse, novels, travel glimpses, a ten-thousand-dollar-prize play, and at least two excellent collections of short-stories, *Meadow-Grass* and *Vanishing Points*. The first of these collections brought the breath of country air to its readers, while the second concerned itself chiefly with members of over-cultivated city society. We could not spare the first; the second leaves us better informed and soberly thoughtful. That Miss Brown is also a novelist of note, the recent volume of *The Prisoner* is ample evidence.

Courtesy of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

James Oppenheim

25. James Oppenheim. — *Pay Envelopes*, by James Oppenheim (not E. Phillips Oppenheim, the English author), is one of the best books of short-stories written in this country. Its scenes are laid in and about a great eastern manufacturing center. The aspirations, the impulses, the bitter struggles, the pleasures, too, of the factory and mill and mine employees are here better displayed than in any other American fiction. James Oppenheim has done nothing else so good, nothing so unchangeably valuable, — but it is a constant hope that he will again rise to the height attained in this volume.

26. Thomas Nelson Page was born and lived while a boy in the region of Virginia where occurred much of General Grant's struggle for the breaking down of the Southern Confederacy. Page's father was a major in the army of General Lee. Thomas Page himself began his public life in the practice of law about ten years after the war. Ten years of the law were sufficient to give him part of the training which

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made him so excellent an ambassador to Italy during the World War.

Page has written many books, and is considered one of the leading novelists of the South. The novels, with but one exception, were published after 1890. *Red Rock* (1891) made evident that he has the power to write admirably this longer form of fiction. But the novels have not found such favor as his short-stories. The short-stories, now bearing the date of 1896, especially "Marse Chan," "Unc' Edinburg," and "Meh Lady," are among the masterpieces of literature interpreting the negro. These tales take us to the heart of the Civil War, not merely of the plantation days or of reconstruction as do most of the stories of the life of the South. With fine and subtle lines Page draws the characters of plantation owners and soldiers and slaves and freedmen. His attitude of mind toward slavery is thoroughly sound and well-balanced, yet over the benevolent life of the plantations, with which he was vividly familiar, he throws the softening air of wistful and regretful memory.

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Thomas Nelson Page

27. O. Henry. — To speak in restrained terms of O. Henry is not easy, because he is still the most popular of short-story writers. Everybody, from the school-boy up, seems to be enamored of O. Henry. Ex-Premier Asquith has asserted that O. Henry is his favorite, and University librarians complainingly confess that no other writer's books are so widely circulated.

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William Sydney Porter, who assumed the pseudonym of O. Henry, seems to have been born at Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1867, though several towns now claim the honor of having been his birthplace. He went to Texas, in an adventurous spirit, and there worked upon a ranch, then in a newspaper office, and soon owned a paper at Austin. The newspaper which came under his control he called *The Rolling Stone*. O. Henry was employed for a time in a bank, then drifted down into Central America. He returned to Texas, to clerk (for two weeks) in a drug store. Next we find him in New Orleans, writing for the daily press. His permanent residence, for the nine years preceding his death, was New York city. Here he accomplished his finest work, such volumes of short-stories as *The Four Million*, *The Voice of the City*, and *The Trimmed Lamp*, — or are *Options*, *Strictly Business*, *Whirligigs*, and *Roads of Destiny* the better books? And yet many have maintained that the stories in *The Gentle Grafter* are best of all! Central America, The South and West, and New York city (which he loved to call Bagdad-on-the-Subway) furnished the settings for most of his stories, — two hundred and fifty-two in all; and perhaps the best single story, not for

O. Henry

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its construction but its substance, is the one in *Strictly Business* entitled "A Municipal Report."

Upon what does O. Henry's popularity rest? Upon at least four things: (1) His fearless revelations of the pettiness of pretense in all life, high and low and all that lies between; (2) his honest and open admiration for the romantic elements in life; (3) his freshness and directness in the use of language; and (4) his exaggeration of both the humorous and the pathetic. Add to these his marvelous gift for plot and surprise, and we find him not merely a popular writer but also an excellent artist. Long may his books live!

Courtesy of The Century Company

James Lane Allen

28. James Lane Allen is a native of Kentucky, born in 1849. He taught school and college classes for several years; since 1884 he has given himself to literary work. On one occasion he wrote: "In so far as literature is concerned, experience has taught me and has always compelled me to see human life as set in Nature; finding its explanation in soil, and sky, and season; merely one of the wild growths that spring up on the surface of the earth amid ten thousand of others." His stories of old and new Kentucky illustrate this belief, except that he takes humanity a little more seriously than to consider it merely a "wild growth" with all the irresponsibility which such a character would imply. Man in his setting of earth and sky

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and season, yet man within society, is Mr. Allen's object of interest.

Allen is a novelist of merit, *The Choir Invisible*, *The Reign of Law*, and *The Mettle of the Pasture* ranking high among the productions of our Southern novelists. Two little books with the life of birds as part of their subject matter, *A Kentucky Cardinal* (1894) and *The Kentucky Warbler* (1918), have met with strong approval. Some disappointment with this last book of his has been expressed, though he who loves a classic style will find it a thing of beauty. Undoubtedly, however, *Flute and Violin, and Other Kentucky Tales and Romances* is the book by which Allen is chiefly to be remembered, for within it is the inimitable short-story of the "Two Gentlemen from Kentucky." This story should not be described or outlined; not one bit of its charm and excitement and originality of incident and of character should be taken away from the reader by any telling beforehand. Another story, "King Solomon of Kentucky," should be read by every one who respects the heroic in life, wherever found.

James Lane Allen has much of the attitude of scientist and of philosopher toward nature; above all, human life is most appealing to him and to those who take delight in following him. Perhaps he is, at times, too ardently addicted to expressing his teaching instinct, surviving within him from earlier days, and too much concerned with polishing his style. But his work is strong and beautiful.

Our list of short-stories would be deficient if mention were not made of Edwin Lefevre's "The Woman and Her Bonds" in his *Wall Street Stories*, of Robert Herrick's *The Master of the Inn*, and of F. Marion Crawford's *The Upper Berth*. Nor is it possible to refrain from commending the rather too academic but none the less promising stories of Mrs. Anne C. E. Allinson in her volume *Roads from Rome*. It is the occasional ability of a writer or teacher to make characters

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of ancient days seem contemporary that keeps alive our faith in the large importance of so-called classical studies, —

> Born into life! — 'tis we,
> And not the world, are new;
> Our cry for bliss, our plea,
> Others have urged it too.

In *Roads from Rome* Mrs. Allinson has included six stories, "sketches" she calls them, concerned with characters from the time of Julius Cæsar to that of Hadrian. In these pages, Horace, Virgil, Ovid, Mæcenas, Catullus, and other men of classical antiquity truly live for us. More culture would be abroad in the land if more literature of this quality were available to the aspiring student. The stories of classic and modern life in Edward Lucas White's *The Song of the Sirens and Other Stories* are also of interest and cultural value.

29. The Novelette. — The novelette is an old form of literature, reaching back to the *Book of Esther*, by an unknown Hebrew author, to *Daphnis and Chloe*, by Longus, a Greek, and to *Cupid and Psyche*, by Apuleius, a Latin. The form was continued in the Middle Ages, its best example being *Aucassin and Nicolette*, by an Old French author whose name is not known, and containing almost the first breath of the Renaissance spirit in literature; an excellent translation is that by Andrew Lang. Then came *The Liberal Lover*, by Cervantes; and in eighteenth-century English literature *The Vicar of Wakefield*, by Goldsmith, and *Rasselas*, by Dr. Johnson. Novelettes were rather frequent in English during the nineteenth century, none of them better than Dickens's *Christmas Carol*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Cousin Phyllis*, the three stories in George Eliot's *Scenes of Clerical Life*, and, best of all, Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*. This brings us to the later days of literature in America, when the novelette became a very important, though not, in excellent examples, a very frequent form of fiction.

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The novelette has been difficult to define. Nearly all who have undertaken to say anything of it have confined their descriptions and definitions to a discussion of its length or brevity as compared with short-story and novel. It is, they all say, usually longer than the short-story and shorter than the novel, — a thing, then, of middle magnitude, a sort of middle sister to the other two forms of prose fiction. But on the basis of such a distinction as that of length or brevity, one might as well speak of the two- or three-act play as a dramalette. There are other and better distinctions; such as that the novelette affords more scope for development of character than does the short-story, though for the development of fewer characters than the novel can compass. The novelette, too, may divide itself into parts, thus resulting in a more imposing structure than the short-story. It should be more "taut and trim," however, than a novel, not indulging at all in digressions or episodes. And perhaps the nature of the purpose or of the theme or the experience from which the story grows determines that the novelette shall be what it is, — something neither short-story nor novel. A biological analogy which has been suggested as the basis of distinction is as good as any; that the seed or germ from which the novelette grows determines that it shall be neither flower nor tree, but shrub.

30. The American Novelette. — In American literature during recent years there have been many popular novelettes, not the least popular of them being Eleanor Hallowell Abbott's *The Sick-a-bed Lady* and *The White Linen Nurse*, Irving Bacheller's *Keeping Up with Lizzie*, and Clara E. Laughlin's *Everybody's Lonesome*. But these have been inferior to somewhat earlier successes, such as Francis Hopkinson Smith's *Colonel Carter of Cartersville*, Henry James's *The Lesson of the Master*, Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart's *Napoleon Jackson, the Gentleman of the Plush Rocker*, Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, Francis Marion Craw-

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ford's *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance*, Kate Douglas Wiggin's *The Old Peabody Pew*, and Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*.

31. F. Hopkinson Smith, a native of Baltimore, was a painter and a lighthouse architect before he became a writer of note. He has written not only novelettes, but also several novels, one of which, *Caleb West, — Master Diver*, will long be remembered. But his novelettes, *Colonel Carter of Cartersville* and *Colonel Carter's Christmas*, are his bid for even longer fame. Each is an attractive picture of the old régime in the South. They are, however, rambling in structure, especially the second. It seems surprising that a civil engineer could be satisfied with a loose-jointed piece of building, even in a literary structure; and it is partly the lack of carefully constructed plot which makes these brief bits of fiction novelettes rather than short-stories. But Colonel Carter himself is beyond praise for charm.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Ruth McEnery Stuart

32. Ruth McEnery Stuart is one of that immortal company of American story-tellers who have made their special study the negro and his general environment in the South. F. Hopkinson Smith, Joel Chandler Harris, Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, Sarah Barnwell Elliot, George W. Cable, O. Henry, Mrs. Sherwood Bonner MacDowell, Mrs. Louise Clarke Prynelle, Miss Martha Young, Harry Stillwell Edwards, Richard Malcolm Johnston, Mrs. Virginia Fraser Boyle, Paul Laurence Dunbar, — and there are many more, — have found the negro finely susceptible of literary treatment. Few of these authors have been more amusing

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than Mrs. Stuart, and few have dealt more thoughtfully with the humor and pathos of the old plantations.

The negro in American literature has become well worth the investigation of the student who desires entertainment and the pleasure of pursuing something unique in the field of art. The treatment of the negro is one of the distinctive features of our literature in comparison with that of Europe. An excellent introduction to this province of literature may be found in Mrs. Stuart's *Napoleon Jackson* and her *Lamentations of Jeremiah Johnson*. In these books the author presents both the character of the typical Southern negro and the structure of Southern society.

33. Stephen Crane. — The Great War renewed an interest in the stories of Stephen Crane, especially his *Red Badge of Courage*. Crane's stories are rather sensational and his heroes as a rule not convincing characters. In *The Red Badge of Courage*, however, he achieved one of the most remarkable studies of the mind of the soldier in action. The book was popular immediately after its publication in 1895, and in the handling of its peculiar subject matter has not yet been surpassed by any of the books of fiction of the World War. The battle of Chancellorsville, during the war between the States, is the environment of its action, and the psychological analysis, in simplest terms, of the mind of the country boy who there underwent his baptism of blood and iron and fire is said by soldiers who fought in the great battles of the World War to be true to their experience.

34. Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome* is a strong though unpleasant piece of work. Its brilliancy, and its hardness, the sharp vividness of its pictures and of its clearly ringing expository phrases, are characteristic of Mrs. Wharton's maturer books. This novelette contains a stark and terrible story of a New England rural love affair more terrible, more bitter and hopeless in its results, than a thousand deaths. Another novelette, *Madame de Trêymes*, is a subtle tale of

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the struggle of several, but especially two, Americans with the unbreakable bonds of French society and family tradition.

35. F. Marion Crawford. — No example of this interesting type of fiction, the novelette, readily finds a place above F. Marion Crawford's *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance*, an alluringly pathetic story of a Russian nobleman exiled to Munich, Germany, and suffering from illusions which alternately exalt and humiliate his sensitive yet truly noble spirit. But Crawford must be reserved for the pages upon the novelists of to-day.

36. Booth Tarkington, also, is a novelist of fame, though the fine craftsmanship of an early novelette entitled *Monsieur Beaucaire* has not been equaled in any of his novels. *The Turmoil* is an absorbing novel, but its style is not that of Mr. Tarkington at his best. *Penrod* has amused a vast number; and *Seventeen* is funny, and in some measure true to nature at that age, even though it may prove to have been a book "of the hour" only. But *Monsieur Beaucaire*, a romantic novelette with scene laid in the old city of Bath, England, excels in fineness the workmanship of many British writers upon their own ground.

Photo from Underwood & Underwood, New York
Booth Tarkington

37. The Novel. — There still exist a few persons in the world who will say, when works of the masters of fiction are mentioned, "Oh, they are only novels." The right rejoinder is Jane Austen's in *Northanger Abbey*, — "Only some

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works in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humor, are conveyed to the world in well-chosen language!"

No task is more difficult than to choose the greater American novelists of this twentieth century. One is not likely to be far wrong, however, when he selects Silas Weir Mitchell, William Dean Howells, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, Robert Grant, Francis Marion Crawford, Margaretta Wade Campbell Deland, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Owen Wister, Edith Wharton, David Graham Phillips, William Allen White, Frank Norris, Winston Churchill, Anne Douglas Sedgwick, and Ellen Glasgow. This is not an arrangement of climax, but in the order of birth, Weir Mitchell having been born in 1829, and Ellen Glasgow in 1874. The wide popularity of Dorothy Canfield among young people, and the vogue of Sinclair Lewis among the mature make them also candidates for this list.

38. S. Weir Mitchell was a Philadelphia physician, a specialist in nerve disorders, who found relief and more from his exacting professional life in writing novels, among which *Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker* stands foremost. *Hugh Wynne* is a story of the time of the war for Independence. It is a book to live with; one lingers over its reading, and long regrets having come to its end. Mitchell's many books are sane and full of health, if not altogether beautiful in their graceful style and optimistic tone.

39. Mark Twain. — The great book of Mark Twain's later days, as we have already said in an earlier chapter, was the *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, a chronicle of the Maid of Orleans who saved France at one of the critical moments of that devoted country's existence. Although this book is based upon old records and memoirs and is true to the historic character of its heroine, yet it is in reality a

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historical romance, belonging rather to fiction than to history. The book added much force to the claim, not difficult to question, of those who maintain that Mark Twain is the greatest of American men of letters.

40. William Dean Howells as well as Mark Twain belongs to a generation ago rather than to ours, and he did not in our day equal the quality of his work before 1890, excepting in the one point already noted, that *The World of Chance* (1893) contains Howells's strongest and best portrait of a woman. There is also much autobiography in this book. It should be read by every young man ambitious to break into the world of publication. *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890) is a characteristic New York story, nearly in its author's best vein, and *The Flight of Pony Baker* (1902) is a captivating boys' story. In general, it may be said of Howells that he was no better workman in these later books than in his earlier. Some have thought that he became in them more seriously involved in social problems than his talents for solving them warrant. Until his death in 1920 he was the most representative of American novelists of recent years.

41. Robert Grant. — Among the many lawyers, or those who began their careers as lawyers, who have found the profession of literature more congenial or more insistently demanding their gifts, Judge Robert Grant of Boston is one of the most distinguished. Robert Grant is a good essayist as well as a powerful novelist. His essays, as in the *Art of Living*, are refined, humorous, scholarly, attractively written, and, in fact, all that excellent essays should be excepting that they are wanting in the sure touch of a master. His best-known novel, *Unleavened Bread*, is a biting satire upon the social climbers of nineteenth-century America. The character of Selma White, in this novel, is one of the ably portrayed characters of the world's fiction.

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42. Francis Marion Crawford was a "prince of story-tellers." His purpose, as he stated it in his *The Novel — What It Is*, was to amuse and interest the reader. He frankly asserted, too, that, as realism proposes to show men what they are and romanticism to show men what they should be, he would cast his lot with the romanticists; for "more good," he said, "can be done by showing men what they may be, ought to be, or can be than by describing their greatest weaknesses with the greatest art." Crawford early wrote a novel with setting in East India, — *Mr. Isaacs*, it was called, — a crude but deeply interesting book. Several Italian tales he also wrote, among them *Saracinesca* (1887), *Sant' Ilario*, and *Don Orsino*. These three books constitute a trilogy (a single story made up of three separate stories); in this case, of a patrician family of modern Rome from 1865 to about 1888. *The Three Fates* (1891) should be read by every young man and woman who desires to pursue the life of authorship. These volumes come short only of being great books, and they have given their author as high a reputation away from America as at home.

F. Marion Crawford

Crawford was a man of genius, seeing and painting things as they are and making men see what they should be. He was not quite a great artist, for he was faulty in composition, building, construction. The reason for this faultiness is that Crawford attempted to write what is called the Epic Novel, the most difficult of all prose literature to form into an artistic structure, because of the multitude of details

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which clamor for inclusion. The epic novel has been defined by "Calvin Winter" as "the type wherein a great social movement, a moral or political revolution drawing to a climax, serves as the background of the story, while the destiny of some special group, some single family, some individual man or woman, closely interwoven with the progress of the general movement, forms the central thread of the plot, the focus of interest." Such an epic is *Saracinesca* and its sequels. A novelette already mentioned, *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance*, is much slighter in importance of subject matter than this epic, but it is more artistic in unity as it is also more appealing in charm.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
Margaret Deland

Though F. Marion Crawford lived much abroad, he belongs to America, unqualifiedly, — as we should have a right to expect of a nephew of the author of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

43. Margaret Deland is a native of Pennsylvania, but since 1880 has lived in Boston. About that date Mrs. Deland began her career of authorship. Her first attempts were in verse; then came a remarkable novel, *John Ward, Preacher*, a book which thoughtfully, earnestly, and skilfully handled subjects of greatest religious importance. Mrs. Deland's short-stories in *Old Chester Tales* published in 1899, and the two novels *The Awakening of Helena Richie* and *The Iron Woman*, placed her in the ranks of those who must be considered upon the ground of permanency. These

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two novels are bound together by the presence of some of the same characters in each. *The Iron Woman* was praised by Henry M. Alden, a former editor of *Harper's*, as the strongest in understanding of the facts of life and in narrative power of any novel written by an American woman, — the best novel by a woman since George Eliot. It is a vigorous work, reflecting the industrial life of Pittsburgh, and, incidentally, carrying a strong and beautiful love story. Mrs. Deland is prevailingly bright and cheerful in the atmosphere of her work. She is capable of rich humor, deep sentiment, and strong pathos, and is at her best when the greater issues of modern life face her and her characters; at such times she writes with an interest which has made her one of the most popular of living novelists, and with a directness of effort which carries conviction even to those who are opposed to her thought.

Photo by Brown Bros., New York

Kate Douglas Wiggin

44. Kate Douglas Wiggin (Mrs. George C. Riggs) was born at Philadelphia, but lived during girlhood in rural New England. At the age of eighteen she removed, for a period of residence, to California. In youth, Kate Douglas Wiggin, according to her sister, was an assiduous reader, her "literary passions" being the *Arabian Nights*, *Scottish Chiefs*, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, *Don Quixote*, Irving's *Mahomet*, Thackeray's *Book of Snobs*, Fouqué's *Undine*, *The Martyrs of Spain*, Shakespeare, and Dickens. She has always been interested in educational affairs, and, it may justly be said, was above all others responsible for the organization in this country of free kindergartens for the

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children of the poor. But one needs nowadays only to refer to *A Cathedral Courtship*, *The Birds' Christmas Carol*, *Polly Oliver's Problem*, *Timothy's Quest*, *Penelope's Experience* (carried through three books), and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* to be sure of delighted attention from those who have read and admired her books. Yet *The Old Peabody Pew* is a story of rarer beauty than any of these.

45. Stories of college life seldom have merit. Students themselves are not, as a rule, sufficiently matured in the craft of writing to produce superior stylistic form, though they are astonishingly fertile in fancy and in strong, if crude, imagination. An occasional exception serves only to probe the rule. The practised writer, on the other hand, has shunned the field, or has been so smitten with the glamour of it within his memory that he does it the injustice of extravagant exaggeration, though college life has formed an important feature of more than one successful novel (as Dorothy Canfield's *The Bent Twig*), when presented as a lesser phase of the careers of their characters. The preparatory school and college stories of Owen Johnson, *The Varmint*, *Tennessee Shad*, *Stover at Yale*, are worth mention in passing.

46. Owen Wister. — One writer, however, has attained a distinct success in his short-story of college life, *Philosophy Four*. This was Owen Wister, though this little book is one of the least valuable of all that he has done. He has written a biography of General Grant, and at least three well-known novels, the most tantalizing of the novels being *Lady Baltimore*, which, by the way, is the name of a kind of cake, not of a woman, and was first found in a Woman's Exchange! *Lady Baltimore* is Owen Wister's tribute to Henry James, for only a conscious disciple of James could have written it; no other sort of person could have done all this verbal skirmishing, — the verbal minuets, however, are Wister's own.

During the Great War, Wister wrote a powerful exposi-

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tion of its causes in *The Pentecost of Calamity*. But the book from his pen which caught the popular favor most securely is the story of a Wyoming cow-boy, told in *The Virginian*. One hesitates to call this a novel; it is rather an accretion of short-stories. The parts read in a detached fashion; but there is a unity of idea, which lies in the epic background rather than in a specific theme. This unity of idea gives to the book a totality of effect which is not quite that of a novel and yet is much more than that of a mere collection of short-stories. The book is a delightful *story*, one we would fain believe true. And it is a *picture* of life, a life that has gone forever, that was none the less important and interesting because it was doomed to go, the life of the cow-puncher, "the last romantic figure on our soil," as Wister himself has called him.

Photo from Underwood & Underwood, New York

Edith Wharton

47. Edith Wharton is a notable figure in our literature. She is interested chiefly in the world of the mind, in the illusions and misunderstandings that bring suffering to the spirit. Human hopes and the weaknesses which prevent the attainment of human desires, and the barriers of custom and the "irony of circumstances" which appear to control rather than to be controlled, afford most of the material for her short-stories, novelettes, and novels. Representative of the short-stories which she has written to exhibit the conflict of human motives is the volume called *The Greater Inclination;* of her novelettes, the latest one, *Summer*, is typi-

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cal of her employment of the story of an individual to emphasize the importance of a social problem; and of her novels the best are *The House of Mirth* and *The Custom of the Country*, both tragedies, the second perhaps somewhat less tragic than over-satirical. *The House of Mirth* is a careful study of the tragedy of a finely educated and high-spirited but moneyless woman, unable to reconcile her refined tastes with her lack of opportunity to gratify them. *The Custom of the Country* is the story of a woman of almost the directly opposite sort. Another novel, *The Age of Innocence* (1921), in its year of publication promised to be one of the "best-sellers" of its day. These novels make it clear that Mrs. Wharton has much knowledge of the human heart; also that she has a faculty comparable with that of Henry James for analyzing the windings and inner revulsions of the human mind. Mrs. Wharton is sometimes spoken of as an imitator of Henry James. It is more nearly the truth to say that both had a similar inheritance of culture and were surrounded with similar circumstances of education and the opportunity for extended social study; that both were endowed alike with introspective minds and with interest in the contrasts of human life; that each possessed the faculty for exhaustive analysis of states of mind, of mood, of the working of passion, and of the conflict of the individual and society, of reason and impulse, of the heart and the understanding.

48. David Graham Phillips. — Almost a score of novels are our heritage from David Graham Phillips, who died before the full fruition of his powers. He was a pioneer in his work, in that he was one of the first to present with outspoken fearlessness American life of to-day as seen directly by one who desired to impress readers with the failure of the "upper classes" to live lives of responsibility. Since Emerson no one has taught more earnestly that "It is as exact a truth as any in chemistry or mechanics that

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Aristocracy is the natural, the inevitable sequence of widespread ignorance, and Democracy the natural, the inevitable sequence of widespread intelligence. . . . The story of history, rightly written, would be the story of the march of Democracy, now patiently wearing away obstacles, accelerated there, now sweeping along upon the surface, again flowing for centuries underground, but always in action, always the one continuous, inevitable force. There has never been any more danger of its defeat than there has been danger that the human brain would be smoothed of its thought-bearing convolutions and set in retreat through the stages of evolution back to protoplasm."

Phillips was a reporter for the New York *Sun*, then London correspondent for the New York *World*. He also devoted himself to what in those days were termed "muckraking" articles for magazines; then came his novels. He was an untiring workman. He said, "Every one of my books was written at least three times . . . and when I say 'three times' it really means nine times, on account of my system of copying and revision. . . . I have writer's cramp every spring." Back of his hard work were his eagerness for reform, and his belief that "the matter of giving life to the pages of a novel is the result of industrious study of human beings." An important principle underlies each of his books, — such as that man, like other animals, makes his best records under handicap, or that the family is the unit of human happiness.

His books are almost among the best novels of the time, — *The Great God Success*, *The Second Generation*, *Light-Fingered Gentry*, and *The Grain of Dust*, to name only a few of them. Not even Carlyle has ever shown more depth of sincere hatred for shams than did David Graham Phillips. The unmasking of political and social shams was his mission, the "showing up" especially of the life of the "yellow rich"; and through all of his efforts to do this runs a pas-

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sionate advocacy of the Americanism which demands a working belief that civilization does not mean property but means men and women. Yet in all the diseases of the American body politic and social, with his characteristically American optimism he saw the sign of vitality. He believed in the curative power of illness. He was a "prophet of the twentieth century unrest and reconstruction," a radical prophet, one "out for results."

Photo by Brown Bros., New York
William Allen White

49. William Allen White, a Kansas newspaper editor, has been a popular writer upon political principles, through the medium of magazine articles, but he has written also short-stories, and two remarkable novels, *A Certain Rich Man* and *In the Heart of a Fool.* A visit to France in 1917 resulted in a volume with the title *The Martial Adventures of Henry and Me,* giving an illuminating account of what he saw and thought there.

An earlier book, *In Our Town* (1906), had already set sharp the edge of expectation for works which the future historian of American social life might well consider as documents of highest value. These works came when, in 1909 and in 1918 respectively, were published *A Certain Rich Man* and *In the Heart of a Fool.* The story of John Barclay in the first is the story of American life on the Western plains beginning in 1857, when Kansas was frontier, and

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ending in 1909, when there was no longer an American frontier, unless perhaps in our Asiatic islands. Strong types and sharply outlined individuals are in this novel and in its greater successor, as well as social, political and business background, and the author writes as one who has much to say and all is important. Few books are more persuasive than these. Mr. White believes *In the Heart of a Fool* to be his best book.

50. Frank Norris. — Though born in Chicago, Frank Norris was taken to California so early in his life that the chief impressions which embodied themselves in his novels were derived from the life of the west coast. Norris was trained in a newspaper office, writing thus, he said, for the Plain People. In his early fiction he showed the influence of Stevenson in *Moran of the Lady Letty* (Norris's one purely romantic book) and the influence of Zola in *McTeague* (a strongly and repulsively realistic study in heredity and environment, which its author took four years to write). But Norris did not quite distinguish between the chief methods of those two masters. "For my own part," he said (and he wrote fiction accordingly), "I believe that the greatest realism is the greatest romanticism, and I hope some day to prove it." Norris wrote realistically, though not because he wanted to be a realist, as Zola did, but because he wanted to make evident to all readers the *significance* of the real,

Frank Norris

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for, said he, "Literature is of all the arts the most democratic."

Like David Graham Phillips, Norris was a pioneer in twentieth century literature, because, for one thing, he believed that the novel is something *essential* to modern civilization, — "Essential," he said, "because it expresses modern life better than architecture, better than painting, better than poetry, better than music. It is as necessary to the civilization of the twentieth century as the violin is to Kubelik, as the piano is to Paderewski. . . . It is an instrument, a tool, a weapon, a vehicle. It is that thing which in the hand of a man makes him civilized and no longer a savage, because it gives him a power of durable, permanent expression." The effect of such ideas, and of the work done in accordance with such ideas, particularly of the fine craftsmanship of that work, has been almost immeasurable, not only upon the younger generation of novelists, but also upon the older workers who have survived Norris.

Norris maintained that the novel is a greater molder of public opinion and of public morals than the press. "The press is read with lightning haste, and the morning news is waste paper by noon. But the novel goes into the home to stay. It is read word for word; is talked about, discussed; its influence penetrates every chink and corner of the family." While Norris wrote for the people he did not write for popularity. He never truckled; never took off his hat to fashion and held it out for pennies. He was a realist for the sole reason that he believed it essential that people, "the People," hear, not a lie, but the truth, and that they should understand that truth.

Norris's aim was to write in prose fiction form the epic of our national life. He planned three volumes for this purpose: *The Octopus; The Pit;* and a third, which was to have been named *The Wolf* but which never saw the light, for he died at the age of thirty-seven, before he was able to put

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his plan into form. Wheat is the symbol of American life in these two volumes, as gold is in *McTeague*. *The Octopus* is the epic tale of the early Western railroad, the road that brooked no competition, that fed upon the labor of men, destroying them, and yet feeding the world with the Titan wheat harvests of Californian valleys. All the "baseness and the grandeur, the sensuality and the spirituality" which accompanies these gigantic operations is almost brutally set forth. Through "the iniquitous burden of extortionate freight rates, imposed like a yoke of iron" the railroad prevailed. "Men, — motes in the sunshine, — perished. . . . *But the wheat remained.*" *The Pit* is the story of Chicago wheat traders and trading, inferior in "strength and brilliancy and lyric quality," as it is inferior in subject matter, to *The Octopus*. Yet it has been more widely read, for the obvious if not very commendable reason that in *The Pit* men and women are more "everyday" and like our too conventional selves. As an allegory *The Octopus*, though not worthy of being styled the great American novel, is yet a landmark, a sign-post, on the way to that yearned-for achievement.

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Winston Churchill

51. Winston Churchill. — One of the most conscientious and assiduous of workers in the realm of the novel is Winston Churchill. He has spent three or four years upon almost every one of his books. Thackeray is his model; apparently his ambition has been to rise to the mid-Victorian height, though he does not seem likely now to reach it. In most instances his books are panoramic in scope, attempting surveys of large phases of American life. *Richard Carvel,*

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The Crossing, *The Crisis*, *Coniston*, *The Inside of the Cup*, are cases in point. The first three are historical novels, dealing, the first with the period of the War for Independence, the second with the period of the settling of the Middle West, and the third with the period of the Civil War, or shall we call it "the war for Southern Independence"? *The Crisis* has received great praise for its sketch of Lincoln, though some surviving personal friends of the President have asserted that the picture is inadequate. *The Inside of the Cup* aroused interest by its fearless arraignment of modern ecclesiastical religion, and for the moment gave its author reputation for profound religious insight. Mr. Churchill is a man of forceful intellect, and writes seriously; but he has not said the last word upon the subject of religion in America, and would not wish anyone to believe that he had done so. The best, the most graphically vigorous narrative of all his books, is *Coniston*, the story of Jethro Bass, a New Hampshire political boss. In this novel the author knows thoroughly what he is talking about. If *Coniston* has been less popular than *The Crisis*, it is not the fault of the author nor of his book but of the public. Mr. Churchill has been more rapid in production of late, and his quality has fallen away correspondingly.

52. Anne Douglas Sedgwick (since 1908 Mrs. de Selincourt) has published at least seven volumes, one of which, *Tante*, has been widely circulated. A late volume is *The Encounter*, and is worthy of a larger body of readers than it has secured. It is of especial interest because, and perhaps solely because, it contains an intimate study of the personal side of the life of the German philosopher Nietzsche. The picture here drawn of the much condemned thinker is not a repulsive one, though rather belittling. There are other characters in *The Encounter* who are well delineated, and the intricacies of the story are unforgettable.

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53. Ellen Glasgow. — The foremost woman novelist of the South is Ellen Glasgow, who was born at Richmond, Virginia, in 1874. Most of her novels depict the scenes and characters of the region with which life has made her most familiar. These novels of the South fall into three groups, all of the groups held together as one, however, by a common theme, that of marriage among different social "classes." The first group comprises two books, *The Battle-Ground* and *The Deliverance;* the second, also two, *The Voice of the People* and *The Romance of a Plain Man;* and in the third group one volume stands thus far alone, *The Miller of Old Church.*

Like nearly all of the books of Frank Norris, of Phillips, and of Churchill, these novels by Miss Glasgow are epical, for they represent as background and leading element of their content the life of a large community (of Virginia, or, at most, the "New South"), and with this presentation they delineate the history of one or more families, and within these families the personal careers in full of one or more individuals who are the most typical or symbolic of some aspects of the life of the large community involved. *The Battle-Ground* and *The Deliverance* are concerned respectively with the life of Virginia during the Civil War and the period of reconstruction. *The Voice of the People* and *The Romance of a Plain Man* present pictures of the rise, after the reconstruction period, of the former white tillers of the soil and other laborers, if not, indeed, the "poor white trash," and their assimilation by or amalgamation with the impoverished "aristocrats" who in the time of their distress find noble qualities in the lower classes, not latent only but afire with ambition and with recognized achievement, now that opportunity has ceased to pass them by.

It is not easy to say which is the best result of the masterly labors of Miss Glasgow. Perhaps the most lasting triumph is *The Romance of a Plain Man.* Or it may be *Life*

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and Gabriella, a book in which life in New York and in Richmond is carefully and interestingly portrayed, a book of fine social discernment and vivid story telling. *The Romance of a Plain Man* is a close and strong study of the inner development of individual character through process of self-education; it is a superb piece of story-building. Yet it is not so likely to be closely examined by social students in the future as are the books portraying the life during war and reconstruction days. Those two "novels of manners," as also *The Voice of the People*, bring forward more fully the circumstances of a society that is passing, or has passed permanently away.

The literary principle of illustrating the universal through the particular is admirably exemplified by *The Miller of Old Church*, even though the setting is but the neighborhood of a little country community, old-fashionedly named Old Church. In the theme lies the universal element of this novel, — the struggle of the "lower classes" to push upward, as they everywhere have done and continue to do. But the author also meets in this book the demand of Frank Norris that, while the theme or purpose of a novel is to the story as the key-note is to the sonata, yet with the author of the novel as with the musician the leading interest must not be the theme, nor the key-note, but the story. And it is the human story rather than the working of a great theme in human life which makes this book a notable contribution to our literature.

54. Sinclair Lewis. — In 1921 was published Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, which immediately commanded the attention of numberless readers as the strongest bit of realistic fiction written since the close of the Great War. It is the story of a small town in the Northwest told with pitiless dislike for the narrowness of small town life. The reaction to the town is represented by one of its women, not native there, but coming to the town sensitive, eager, and open-

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hearted, burning with the desire to be of service characteristic of the young college graduate. One reads the book slowly, that he may lose not one detail of its incidents and of its marvelously pictured scenes. One may question whether there is not more saving salt in each of all the towns of three thousand inhabitants between Minneapolis and San Diego than the author will admit. However, there is so much of truth in the revelation of the drab and dull in the life of the small American community, and so much of power in the author's conviction that this is all subject to reform that *Main Street* is likely to live not for its pictures alone, but as one of the foremost forces in accomplishing changes in American social life.

Sinclair Lewis

There have been many other novelists since 1890 who have added to our durable satisfaction: Edward Noyes Westcott, author of *David Harum;* Meredith Nicholson, with *The House of a Thousand Candles;* Charles Major, author of *When Knighthood was in Flower;* Stewart Edward White, entertaining writer of the north woods and of Arizona deserts, and of Africa and Alaska, too; Paul Leicester Ford, Richard Harding Davis, Dorothy Canfield, Mary Johnston, Arthur Train, Theodore Dreiser, a powerful writer but one of extreme crudeness; Joseph Hergesheimer, attractive in style, as in *Java Head;* Henry Sydnor Harrison, Ernest Poole, and almost numberless others, some of whom, possibly, should not be nameless here.

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55. Novelists of Promise: Ernest Poole; Henry Sydnor Harrison; Dorothy Canfield. — According to George Barr McCutcheon, the best *title* in all American fiction is *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*, — a good book, but why so all-good in title? Its author is John Fox, Jr. The promise of Ernest Poole appears greater than that of any others of the younger authors of fiction at this date (1921), as witnesseth *The Harbor;* perhaps in *His Family*, promise has already become fulfillment, though there appears the old danger that its author will dissipate his gifts in overproduction. Or is it Henry Sydnor Harrison who gives the greater promise? His correspondence during the war would not indicate so. Yet his *Queed* is a good story; one can hardly wait for the apparent tragedy to develop into its comedy, so absorbing is the tale. Harrison carries on the more obvious literary traditions; there is, in fact, a touch of Dickens in the story. His *Angela's Business* is only a little less successful. Yet we may be not amiss if we fix our faith upon neither of these authors, but upon Dorothy Canfield (Mrs. J. R. Fisher). She is a good writer, both in detail and in plot-construction, and she probes deeply into the souls of characters. *The Bent Twig* is a notable success. In *The Brimming Cup* Mrs. Fisher provides a corrective for those who take *Main Street* too seriously. It is a vigorous work, stimulating in its thought, and with a strongly flowing, com-

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Ernest Poole

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pelling movement in its style. Its author is a psychologist who does not care what the fashion is in books, but writes for her subject's sake. Here her subject is the eternally disconcerting human being with its locked and sealed strong-box of secrets. Her keen insight finds a way into that strong-box, and her treatment of what she finds there is good for this age.

The social student cannot afford to pass by Ernest Poole; the student of the "New South" (and of the newspaper, for that matter) cannot afford to leave Harrison unread; and in Dorothy Canfield we at last appear to have an author who understands the college community, though that is, perhaps, the least important feature of her interesting book. The most important thing said in *The Bent Twig* is in Chapter XXXI and relates to the basis of elementary education. — "Perhaps all this modern ferment of what's known as 'social conscience' or 'civic responsibility,' isn't a result of the sense of duty, but of the old, old craving for beauty." And who has better stated the function of our public school than Dorothy Canfield (Chapter VII)? — thus: "Those devouringly active little minds did not spend six hours a day in school without learning something incessantly. The few rags and tatters of book-information they acquired were but the merest fringes on the great garment of learning acquired by these public school children, which was to wrap them about all their lives. What they learned during those eight years of sitting still and not whispering had nothing to

Henry Sydnor Harrison

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do with the books in their desks or the lore in their teachers' brains. The great impression stamped upon the wax of their minds, which became iron in after years, was democracy —"

Dorothy Canfield

56. Herman K. Vielé; Charles D. Stewart; Joseph Hergesheimer. — Our sketch would be sadly less complete than it now is, if we did not mention three other works of fiction. H. K. Vielé's *The Inn of the Silver Moon* is one of the most charming of foolish stories, high romance walking in the midst of familiar matter of to-day, a miracle of rare device; its author surely on honey-dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of Paradise! Still, *The Inn of the Silver Moon* is "only a novelette." But Charles D. Stewart's *Partners of Providence* is a real novel, rich with humor, astonishing for the keenness and breadth of understanding, such a book as the world has waited for ever since Mark Twain's stories of river life. The book has come, and it is better than the world expected, for it is not merely a good imitation of Mark Twain; it is an independent book, intensely interesting, very entertaining, — the kind of book that makes one, having read it, feel that he knows man and the world better, and that acquiring the knowledge has been worth while. Joseph Hergesheimer has been praised, not by the seeker after entertainment alone, but by more serious readers, for his *Three Black Pennys*, a novel of American life extending through a long and varied period of our history. His *Java Head* as a work of art is even better.

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57. The American Stage. — It takes the critic to his wits' end to be sure that he is placing an unprejudiced estimate upon the printed plays of America. In brief, such an estimate would probably be that, from the point of view of the box office, American drama has been a matchless success, but that as literature it has been embarrassingly inconsiderable. We have had many excellent playwrights, men who have known how to lay out thrilling and yet consistent plots and who have been able to manage the tactical details of play presentation almost to perfection. Bronson Howard, Clyde Fitch, William Gillette, Charles Klein, George H. Broadhurst, Augustus Thomas, Langdon Mitchell, David Belasco, Louis K. Anspacher, George M. Cohan, — and there have been and are more. Among them Mr. Cohan is considered foremost as a maker of plays for the stage; but that is not to accord to his plays the praise of being literature. It is, in fact, doubtful whether a single play from the hand of any one of these men will be appraised as literature a half century hence, the doubt arising only because Fitch's *Beau Brummel*, Thomas's *The Witching Hour*, Mitchell's *The New York Idea*, and Anspacher's *The Unchastened Woman* are still read, even after the likelihood of their frequent revival in the theater has vanished. The first of these four plays is a good picture of an historical character who is still of interest; the second is a plea for a semi-popular psychic creed which features mental telepathy as one of its strongest points; the third is often said to be our best comedy of manners; and the fourth is an excellent comedy of manners. A fifth drama may be worth more than passing mention, Eugene O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon*.

The reason for so little real drama from this group of playwrights is that they have not studied American life and brought it before the American people, but have given attention to a small phase of that life, the metropolitan phase, and have presented it to cosmopolitans only. To be more

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specific, they have studied only the life of Broadway and its vicinity, and have staged it for New Yorkers of all nationalities. Even though Clyde Fitch wrote about sixty-six plays and Augustus Thomas began a series of plays each to be named after some one of the Commonwealths of the Union (but getting no farther in alphabetical order than Colorado), yet their characters are inclined to talk and live like the cliff-dwellers of Manhattan. It appears difficult, also, for some of our playwrights to remember that wealth of detail in action and exuberance of dialogue do not make a drama.

58. Literary Prose Drama. — There are a few other playwrights who have been more successful, at least with the library-table play: Mary Austin, William Vaughn Moody, Edward Sheldon, Edward Knobloch, Charles Kenyon, Alice Brown, Percy MacKaye, George Middleton; and we might now include Charles Rann Kennedy, author of *The Servant in the House*, as he has recently taken steps toward naturalization as an American citizen. David Pinski, also, a Russian, author of the drama entitled *The Treasure* and of several one-act plays, appears to have begun the process of Americanization, and, if he continues it, will be eagerly claimed by us. All these have written plays powerful and sincere, not only in subject matter but also in manner of treatment, — and it is by the treatment of his material, of course, that the artist stands or falls. We cannot overlook at least five writers of poetic drama, who will be discussed in a later section of this chapter, Josephine Preston Peabody (Mrs. Lionel Marks), Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan, Richard Hovey, William Vaughn Moody, and Brian Hooker.

59. Mary Austin, Edward Sheldon, and William Vaughn Moody have done with the drama what many short-stories have been employed to do in excellent manner; they have created a literature "of the soil." Mary Austin's *The Arrow Maker* is a play with a setting of Western mountains

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and the tribal vicissitudes of the native Indians. It is true that the play reveals the universal longing of Woman to have and to serve, but that the play is distinctively American is, in this instance, more important. Plays a-plenty with material immensely varying from the material of this one have exhibited the same universal quality; but this particular material could have been found only upon our soil. Moody's *The Great Divide* and Sheldon's *The Nigger* are also peculiarly American, far more of the United States than the much praised *The Melting-Pot* of the English author Israel Zangwill. Moody's play represents setting and events in the Southwest, though there is much of New England in it, too; Sheldon's represents setting and events in the Southeast, and all impossible elsewhere. Yet another prose play by Moody, *The Faith-Healer*, though less read because of its minimum of purely sensational appeal, is superior as real drama to *The Great Divide*. Mr. William Archer, the distinguished English dramatic critic, has written of *The Faith-Healer* that it is the only American play of real psychological importance, a statement with which we can not entirely agree. Mr. Archer can hardly have read the one-act plays of George Middleton.

60. Edward Knobloch's most successful experiment has been done in collaboration with Arnold Bennett, English playwright, essayist, and novelist, upon the drama entitled *Milestones*. This drama is famous as a unique experiment in technique, the authors carrying one theme through the action and character revealment of three generations of one family, and doing it successfully, to the final confusion of the ancient dogma of the unity of time. The theme of this play could hardly be older, — that human nature is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. Charles Kenyon's *Kindling* has excited great interest among students of social conditions. It is an over-idealized bit of work in its characterization, and is lacking in symmetry and proper empha-

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sis of detail, yet for its restraint in sentiment is strongly to be commended. Miss Alice Brown's *Children of the Earth*, a ten thousand dollar prize play, is an extraordinary study in many things that can be found in our national life if one will but turn his mind and eyes away from the great cities. The play has not been convincing to some readers of present-day drama, but only because it seems difficult for them to understand, much less to see for themselves, that there can be so great and so profound complexity of life in "the provinces." Some parts of this play are among the most beautifully ethereal passages in our literature, as we might expect from so accomplished an author as Miss Brown.

61. The One-act Play. — The work of Percy MacKaye and of George Middleton takes us into the province of that fine body of literature composed of one-act plays, so popular upon the European stage and so unfailingly attractive to the reader everywhere because of the perfection of dialogue and of structure from the hands of the greatest of the Old World dramatists of the past forty years. An occasional One-act play can be found here and there in the history of literature for many a year before the present time, but it was not deemed an especially important form until the remarkable work of August Strindberg, the Swedish dramatist, gave it vogue in his thirteen diminutive dramas, or one-act plays. Strindberg was quickly followed by Sudermann, Hofmannsthal, Maeterlinck, Hervieu, and many Spanish and Italian playwrights upon the continent of Europe, and by William Sharp, Bernard Shaw, Stephen Phillips, James M. Barrie, Alfred Sutro, Lord Dunsany, Lady Gregory, W. B. Yeats, Synge, Robinson, Masefield, Gibson, Phillpotts, and many others in the British Isles. The one-act play, neither a dramatic short-story nor a compressed drama of the older type, but a distinct literary form, has come to remain.

Numberless one-act plays have been written in America of late years, and to select two or three authors as represen-

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tative of the many is to run the risk of seeming to reject others equally as worthy. Richard Harding Davis, Mrs. Evelyn Greenleaf Sutherland, and Miss Marguerite Merington have won high reputation by their one-act plays. The *Picture-Plays* of Miss Merington make one of the cleverest volumes of recent days. Among the most ambitious attempts of young American authors is the volume of sea-plays by Eugene O'Neill, entitled *The Moon of the Caribbees.*

62. Percy MacKaye and George Middleton are more worthy of notice, and not of notice alone but of careful study; though Mr. MacKaye does insist that it takes less effort to write ten one-act plays than one longer drama, — which is extremely doubtful, if the one-act play be as good as the best. Percy MacKaye's one-act plays in *Yankee Fantasies* are likely to last as long as his loosely constructed and over-ornamented longer plays. Mr. MacKaye has a wide and flexible vocabulary, is a past-master at phrasing, but he has not a great deal of dramatic power. The *Yankee Fantasies* are good in character presentation, the characters being really convincing as New England types, strictly and peculiarly American, almost actual individuals, though of rather eccentric sort.

George Middleton is our most accomplished writer of this particular form. *His Embers and Other One-Act Plays* and *Tradition and Other One-Act Plays* contain his ablest work. They are serious plays, "studies in consequences and readjustments," he has called them, further expressions of some preceding situations. They suggest that other dramatic situations have come before them and have led up to them, and that further dramatic, even tragic, situations would follow if these playlets were actual life, as they almost seem to be. And this is the true art of the one-act play, that it is unitary in its effect, but, like conditions and situations in life, suggestive of what is never told.

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63. Percival Wilde. — Another successful writer of one-act plays is Percival Wilde. He has published three volumes of brief dramatic pieces. Two of them have been much read, — *Dawn and Other One-Act Plays of Life To-day* and *The Unseen Host and Other War Plays.* The title piece of the second of these volumes is based upon the incident of the Angels of Mons. It is said that more of Mr. Wilde's one-act plays have been produced in "Little Theaters" than those of any other American author.

The Great War does not seem as yet to have called forth any noteworthy plays, either one-act or of many acts. Over one hundred war plays were presented upon the American stage during the course of the four years' struggle, but it is doubtful whether any of them, or of the many more written and not made public in the theaters, will have great length of life. War plays will continue to appear, of course, as they did after the Civil War, as will also plays of the readjustment after war, and some of them, we hope, may live.

Writers of Verse

64. Poetic Drama. — Hostile criticism of the poetic drama has been rather popular. The criticism has nearly always taken the form of saying that the poetic drama is not realistic and cannot be. But there is no essential difference between realistic and poetic drama. If poetry has been correctly defined when defined as passion of the soul, then many a realistic drama, whether written in prose or in verse, is packed with poetry; and, on the other hand, if the abiding characteristics of the human mind and heart persist because they are real, then many a poetic play is realistic. Many a poetic play contains world-old aspects of our frail yet strong, failing yet aspiring and achieving, human nature.

65. Josephine Preston Peabody. — Much of this universally and abidingly real content of human life is to be found in Josephine Preston Peabody's *The Piper*, and in her *Mar-*

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lowe. The latter is an attempt to rehabilitate the life of the Shakespeareans, and centers about Christopher Marlowe's song beginning, "Come live with me, and be my Love." It is for the reader who is already equipped with a sense for the historic and for the force of allusion; it is not, perhaps, readily "understanded of the people." But *The Piper* is for everybody, a simple and beautiful and world-wide application of theme underlying the folk-tale already so well told by Browning, the theme that not gold but love will purchase the precious things that we have once driven away from us by base selfishness and false promises. This author has written other books and dramas, but *The Piper* has placed her high among American poets and among playwrights of everywhere. We shall elsewhere have occasion to discuss her as lyric poet.

66. Olive Tilford Dargan, another author of poetic drama, appears, as George Eliot did, to crave living in her mind a universal life. She has made her knowledge almost engirdle the world, and has reflected this unusual breadth of learning in her dramas. The ancient life of Mesopotamia; the life of Greece in the days of her struggles with the Persian, in her Colonial Era, and during the Crusades of medieval days; life in Central America, in Spain, in Russia, in middle-age England, in the United States, and in times and places which exist in the author's mind alone: — all these have yielded settings, background, atmosphere, and content for numerous plays. The strongest among them are *Semiramis, Lords and Lovers, The Siege, The Mortal Gods,* and *The Shepherd.* Mrs. Dargan imitates the Elizabethan dramatists, a daring thing to do, but with a surprising degree of success. She has excellent historical insight and imagination, is a good story-teller, and, at times, writes poetry of considerable merit.

67. Richard Hovey. — From the point of view of poetry, Richard Hovey was the most ably equipped of all recent

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Americans who have attempted the dramatic form. His aim was frankly to create poetry rather than stage plays. The delicately wrought dialogue of his four Arthurian dramas (he had planned nine) under the general title of *Launcelot and Guenevere* is beyond the mouthing of the average actor. In these dramas Hovey played upon an instrument of many strings, and this instrument speaks best to one who listens with the inner ear, the ear of the soul. "All music is what awakes from you when you are reminded by the instruments," — true to the last word this is when one reads the dramas of Hovey, for one forgets author, subject, story, and the incomparable technique of verse while the music of many of their passages is taking swift and complete possession of the spirit of the reader.

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William Vaughn Moody

68. William Vaughn Moody's three poetic dramas, *The Firebringer*, *The Death of Eve*, and *The Masque of Judgment*, must not be overlooked by the student of our literary drama. The last named of these is lofty poetry. Though one will not venture upon a comparison with the poetry of Milton, yet one may say that *The Masque of Judgment* inevitably *suggests* the tone, the thought, and the imaginative vision of, not Milton's masque of *Comus*, but *Paradise Lost*.

69. Brian Hooker. — *Mona*, by Brian Hooker, is described upon its title page as "an opera in three acts." So it is, but it is also one of America's best printed dramas, eminently readable, richly interpretive of love, valor, and religion. Its story is of old Britain, the time of the Roman occupation; its heroine, very blood of Queen Boadicea her-

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self. The music of the opera was written by Horatio Parker, who since the death of McDowell has been America's foremost composer.

70. Lyric Poetry. — If we admit to the company all who write verse, there are in the elect body of poets in this country more than four hundred, — a good many more. The number who sit at the banquet table of the Poetry Society is, — not quite legion. Yet only a few are feasting far up the slopes of Parnassus. Of course, however, to offer a selection of the names of the arrived or nearly arrived few is to invite denunciation and harangue.

Still, probably no one would be disposed to quarrel if we say there should be *included* in such a selection from the thirty years the following: Eugene Field, John Banister Tabb, James Whitcomb Riley, Edwin Markham, George Edward Woodberry, Richard Hovey, Madison J. Cawein, Frederic Lawrence Knowles, Cale Young Rice, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Frank Dempster Sherman, Lloyd Mifflin, Alan Seeger, Olive Tilford Dargan, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Edith Thomas, Gertrude Hall, Anna Hempstead Branch, Josephine Preston Peabody, William Vaughn Moody, Mary McNeil Fenollosa, Robert Frost, and Edward Arlington Robinson.

There are others whose work was so nearly completed before 1890 that we omit them in this discussion save by name, — Joaquin Miller, Phillips Brooks, Henry Cuyler Bunner; and here rather than in the list above belongs James Whitcomb Riley, too, excepting for a very few of his better poems. The life of John Greenleaf Whittier did not come to an end until September 7, 1892; and between 1890 and a few weeks before his death, a dozen or more poems of merit came from his still singing spirit. His last poem, written "at sundown," is the verses to Oliver Wendell Holmes, ending, in the last two stanzas, thus beautifully and in harmony with the entire life of their author, —

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The hour draws near, howe'er delayed and late,
When at the Eternal Gate
We leave the words and works we call our own,
And lift void hands alone

For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul
Brings to that Gate no toll;
Giftless we come to Him, who all things gives,
And live because He lives.

And there are still others who are giving or have given promise, more than, as yet, high fulfillment; among them Clinton Scollard, Sara Teasdale, Louise Imogen Guiney, Helen Gray Cone, Florence Earle Coates, George Sterling, John G. Neihardt, Harriet Monroe, Arthur Guiterman, Angela Morgan, and Vachel Lindsay. Lindsay's poem entitled *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight* was a notable bit of writing during the early days of the Great War. A few in this group and some others claim to possess new theories about poetry, but all of them, after all, are, in nearly all of their best work, quite conventional "practitioners" of poetry. Edgar Lee Masters, Amy Lowell, Witter Bynner, Carl Sandburg, and John Gould Fletcher have been the most ardent advocates of the "new" theories. If one will turn to page 239 of Miss Amy Lowell's *Tendencies of Modern American Poetry*, one will find there, in the chapter on "Imagists," the creed of those who write the "New Poetry," as they term it. But to a student of literary criticism that creed is strangely old, its chief features having been most notably set forth by Wordsworth at the time he and Coleridge published their *Lyrical Ballads*. Those who know nothing about poetry in a technical way and those who know much about it do not consider the "new poets" as of special importance, excepting, as we have said, in their more "conventional" work. It is only those who know a little, but not much, about poetry and what it has achieved who, as a rule, exalt their erratic efforts, which, however, are usually more hum-

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drum than erratic. Has any of our poets, with the exception of Poe, added any distinctively new notes to English poetry?

71. Eugene Field. — A distinctively Western poet was Eugene Field; so much so that though Eastern editors tried hard to entice him even to New York city, he felt that Chicago was as far as he could go for fear that residence farther east would, as he said, squeeze out of what he wrote much of the genuine literary flavor. There was not, however, a great deal of literary flavor in most of his work. It was nearly all mere day to day filling for newspaper columns. His verse is chiefly of the humorous column type, though the very best of that type. It is only for a few poems that we can agree with the biographical note in Stedman's *American Anthology* that "this rare and original minstrel of the West was the Yorick of American poetry, childhood's born laureate, and no less a scholar by nature than a man of infinite humor, and of inimitable, if sometimes too eccentric, jest."

Eugene Field

Eugene Field was a native of St. Louis, Missouri, born in 1850. He was educated in New England, Illinois, and Missouri schools. He engaged in newspaper work at St. Louis, St. Joseph, Kansas City, and at Denver, and finally, until his death in 1895, on the Chicago *Daily News*. His least sophisticated and most distinctive verse was written before 1890, — the ever popular *Little Boy Blue*, for example, in

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1887, though this is more self-conscious and sophisticated than the verses written for the Denver *Tribune* before 1882. *A Little Book of Western Verse*, so delightfully Fieldian, appeared in 1889, as did also a book of prose entitled *A Little Book of Profitable Tales.*

Field strove to satisfy the immediate demand of those whose reading is almost exclusively of the daily journals. This is not to say that therefore his poetry is poor, for the newspaper audience is respectable, not only in size but in general intelligence. Still, nearly all that he supplied for this demand was light literature. In his later years Field appealed a little more directly to more cultivated readers through the poems which reflected his studies in Old English ballads and in Latin literature. But it is the wholesomely sentimental poems like *Little Boy Blue*, and such unfailingly charming fairy-child poems as *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod* that make him live on for us. *The Sugar-Plum Tree*, too, and *Pittypat and Tippytoe*, *Little Blue Pigeon*, *The Rock-a-By Lady*, *The Ride to Bumpville*, and *The Shut-Eye Train* will always delight children, from nine to ninety. Many of Field's children's poems have been set to music, and their perpetuation thus further ensured. Following Field there has developed a group of newspaper poets, the columnists such as "F. P. A." (Franklin P. Adams) of the *New York Tribune*, B. L. T. (Bert Leston Tayler, who died in March, 1921) of the *Chicago Tribune*, and T. A. Daly of Philadelphia. Daly's verses in Italian-American and Irish-American dialect have real value.

72. John Banister Tabb, who died in 1900, was a teacher in Maryland, who wrote brief lyrics which have been keenly admired by lovers of thoughtful directness and exquisite finish in verse. A volume published in 1894 and another in 1897 contain his most artistic productions. *The Water Lily*, *The White Jessamine*, *To Shelley*, and *The Druid* are often quoted from these volumes. Moral and religious devotion,

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and yet freedom of the spirit to express itself in its individual rightness, distinguish the poems of this careful and earnest devotee of both religion and art.

73. James Whitcomb Riley was a survivor into our times, though a few of his later poems, such as the sonnet to *Longfellow* which was published in 1892 (an earlier one was written with the same title), surpass most of the verses from his pen which we so trippingly recite from our childhood memories. Yet he is not likely soon to lose his hold upon our affections, however much we may be inclined to think he was seeking popularity rather than sincere expression.

James Whitcomb Riley

74. Edwin Markham.— The schoolmaster's profession has supplied to literature almost as many recruits within the past few decades as the law supplied during the period of national expansion before 1890. Of those who have been graduated from chair at desk to book upon its top, Edwin Markham is one with notable contemporary reputation. A descendant of the Penn family, and directly sprung from pioneers emigrating from Michigan to Oregon, he became a hard-working teacher, principal, and superintendent in the schools of California. The financial success of *The Man with the Hoe* made it possible for him to take up the profession of letters and give to it exclusive attention. This poem, suggested by a painting by J. F. Millet, is not accorded by its author first place among his many poems. That distinc-

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tion belongs to his "Lincoln," published in *Lincoln and Other Poems*, in the year 1900. Yet George Hamlin Fitch makes the high claim for *The Man with the Hoe* that it is "the finest thing that has been produced in American literature since the Civil War." A third book, *The Shoes of Happiness and Other Poems*, appeared in 1915.

75. George Edward Woodberry. — We are on safe literary ground when we open the pages upon which appear the poems of George Edward Woodberry. Professor Woodberry is bold enough to attempt to express much which he himself has termed "inexpressible"; hence his verse, while intellectually invigorating, is not often of absorbing interest to the casual reader. Poems of love, poems of nature, poems for music's own sake, he has written; but it is the poems in praise of the spiritually ideal that have claimed his rarer hours and have given him international vogue and fame.

George Edward Woodberry

Woodberry's threnody, *The North Shore Watch*, is usually considered the most sincere and sympathetic of all his verse. It is spiritually satisfying. Nevertheless, to-day, when the English-speaking nations are fraternizing as never before in history, his two sonnets entitled *At Gibraltar*, and a third, *America to England*, the country whom he hails as

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Mother of nations, of them eldest we, —
Mother of our faith, our law, our lore,

are even more appealing, especially when the note struck at the end is

Justice we love, and next to justice peace!

76. Richard Hovey. — Among other professors of literature in American colleges who have become makers of literature, Richard Hovey is not one of the least. Undoubtedly his *The Laurel: an Ode*, published in 1889, was greatly influenced by Lanier. And later volumes, *Songs from Vagabondia*, written by Hovey and the Canadian poet Bliss Carman, and *More Songs from Vagabondia*, and, again, *Last Songs from Vagabondia*, are overdone in their zestful imitation of the vagrom spirit of Walt Whitman. But his *Seaward*, an elegy, is a poem of great beauty and of exquisite point and finish; and his poetic dramas, already mentioned, are among the best of American poems. The Arthurian legends are here rewritten with a bold hand. The treatment is fresh, though not so elevated in its imagination as that of the Tennysonian *Idylls of the King*.

In 1898 Hovey published a volume, *Along the Trail*, containing battle-hymns suggested by the Spanish-American war. The hymn that stands among them by itself and foremost is "Unmanifest Destiny," a poem hopeful, comforting, and inspiring. In its last stanza the poem inevitably suggests Whittier's *Eternal Goodness*. This is to commend, however, and not to condemn, — when one reads from Hovey

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

77. Madison Cawein. — The relation of literature to an author's life is closely exemplified in the poetry of Madison

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Cawein. Cawein was born, was educated, and resided at Louisville, Kentucky. He took to himself the heart of nature (or did she take him to her heart?) in that region; and the glory of the slumbrous landscape of the South, the loveliness of its detail in tree, and cloud, and flower, and in the life of man and animal, are reflected in his books. The very titles of individual poems, "Wild Iris," "Heat," "Before the Rain," "To the Locust," "The Twilight Moth," "The Rain-Crow," "The Whippoorwill," "The Tree-Toad," "Feud," "Dead Man's Run," "Ku Klux," "The Moonshiner," "The Quest," "Old Homes," and the titles of his books, *Weeds by the Wall*, *Kentucky Poems*, *Myth and Romance*, *Undertones*, *The Garden of Dreams*, *Red Leaves and Roses*, more than suggest the sensitiveness of Cawein to his environment.

Story, and picture, and fanciful thought, and graceful lyric rhythm were his to use as he willed, this lyrist of the seasons. One who reads his poems knows that in his soul he has been in the fair southland, for here

> Of honey and heat and weed and wheat
> The day has made perfume,

and then

> It's — Oh, for the gate and the locust lane
> And dusk and dew and home again!

78. Frederic Lawrence Knowles was for several years literary adviser of various Boston publishing houses. Despite his occupation as reviewer, he was an optimistic writer; perhaps not so optimistic of the present as of the future, yet firmly believing that the forward flowing tide of time holds in trust much to be given into our hands in days not now far distant. Knowles, obedient to an æsthetic conscience, edited an excellent *Golden Treasury of American Songs and Lyrics*, and published two volumes of original poems, *Love Triumphant* and *On Life's Stairway*.

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79. Cale Young Rice. — A writer who of late has come rapidly forward in public esteem is Cale Young Rice. Rice's volume *Earth and New Earth* came from the press after the outbreak of the World War, and is of interest because it voices, among other notes, its author's strong loathing of militarism, and because it voices also his aspiration toward a definite kind of world citizenship after the war. The title poem, "Earth and New Earth," the group of poems entitled "Winds of War," and a one-act play called "Gerhard of Ryle," are born of artistic ideals, and are of more than temporary value.

80. Paul Laurence Dunbar. — The foremost man of letters given thus far to the world by the negro race of America is Paul Laurence Dunbar. His short-stories of negro life included in *Old Plantation Days* are admirable for their fresh excellence, and his better poems, as those in *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, are attractive wholly apart from any reader's sympathy with his race. Whether the admixture of white blood accounts for the success of the French mulatto Dumas and that of the Russian mulatto Pushkin, one cannot tell. In Dunbar, however, a man of pure African blood, there was the power to produce lyric literature commanding the respect of all his contemporaries in England and America, at least. Not every reader of Dunbar agrees with William Dean Howells that the most commendable of his poems are those which study the moods and traits of his race in its own accent of our English tongue. Some decidedly prefer the lyrics "Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes," "A Summer's Night," and the sonnet "To Harriet Beecher Stowe."

81. William Stanley Braithwaite. — Dunbar died in 1906. One of his prominent successors is William Stanley Braithwaite, editor, anthologist, critic, and poet. He has published two volumes of verse, *Lyrics of Life and Love* and *The House of Falling Leaves*, and many poems in maga-

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zines. By virtue of his *Anthology of Magazine Verse*, one volume for each year since 1913, Braithwaite has rendered a worthy service to American poetry.

82. Frank Dempster Sherman. — There is authentic poetry, even if not much of new quality, in the verse of Frank Dempster Sherman, who was a teacher of architecture in Columbia University and a literary reviewer, as well as a poet of distinction. His metrical efforts hardly rose to the heights of the perfection assigned them by recent notices of his collected poems, but many are endowed with the gift of nobility. The *Little Folk Lyrics* of 1892 and 1897 have not been excelled among his own lines in appeal to the average lover of modern verse. They are thoughtful as well as entertaining.

> All up and down in shadow-town
> The Shadow children go;
> In every street you're sure to meet
> Them running to and fro,

has, for both children and adults, the authentic ring of child life and imagination.

83. Lloyd Mifflin. — In Lloyd Mifflin's eleven little volumes of verse, over five hundred sonnets have been published, together with other forms of poems. Mifflin was first a painter, but later devoted himself chiefly to the study and creation of the sonnet. Lloyd Mifflin's passions have been youth, love, spirituality, and poetry. His last volume, *As Twilight Falls*, a very recent collection, includes many of his best sonnets and lyrics.

84. Alan Seeger. — If Alan Seeger had supervised the publication of his beautiful volume of *Poems*, some of those included would, no doubt, have been eliminated. His almost enviable death, as he with his comrades was charging enemy trenches on the field of Belloy-en-Santerre, July 4, 1916, made impossible his editing his own work, yet some of the poems in this volume the world could ill afford to lose.

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One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name, —

who could refrain from quoting when he thinks of the brief but brilliant career of this young student, traveler, poet, and soldier! After all, his great achievement was his singing a marching-song to his comrades, like the poet he was, as he lay dying and they were charging to victory, — yet not that alone, for two poems, yes, three, *Champaign*, the *Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France*, and *I have a Rendezvous with Death*, are inspired poetry. We could dispense with the *Juvenilia*, though some of its Mexican verses are vivid in their imaginative touches; we could dispense also with the thirty Sonnets and with the Translations; but at least the *Ode* and the *Rendezvous with Death* will be vital forever, with their echo of war "in all its actual stress and under its haunting menace." The last lines of the *Ode* and much of the other poem were as nearly prophecy as one could utter.

Courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons

Alan Seeger

85. Olive Tilford Dargan; Lizette Woodworth Reese. — The spirit of Elizabethan and Caroline poetry has not entirely vanished from the earth. Proof of this is furnished by the verse of Mrs. Olive Tilford Dargan and by that of Miss Lizette Woodworth Reese. Mrs. Dargan has made many contributions of lyric verse to magazines, and a recent volume, *Path Flower*, is filled with flashes of beauty. A reading of "To a Hermit Thrush" and of "There's Rose-

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mary" will introduce one to poetry in which, especially in the second, the old mastery of vowel music lives again. The representative work of Miss Reese, a Maryland woman, is in *A Handful of Lavender* and *A Quiet Road*. Miss Reese's verse belongs to the elder classic world of English literature. There is much of American prose that belongs in style and spirit to earlier days, yet our verse rarely assumes the body or the robe of an earlier date. But Lizette Woodworth Reese might well have lived in the golden days of Herrick and Lovelace. Not that she is an imitator of an earlier time; her poetry has the flavor rather of a dateless age. Miss Reese loves beauty for its own sake, but the expression of beauty with her is the expression of truth, — the beautiful is the good made perfect, too. Into her verse has come the truth of her experience, and it is good and useful because beautiful. "To a White Lilac," "Love Came Back at Fall o' Dew," "Keats," "Thomas à Kempis," and "To a Town Poet," — such poems as these are not many amid the flood of verse that fills our anthologies. One wonders, after all, if the aptest characterization of Miss Reese would not be that she is a wanderer from a Grecian shore.

86. Edith Thomas, born in Ohio in 1854, is one of the foremost singers of the World War. Her style is varied, yet never straying from the grace and taste of the poets of the more classic days, not even in her most passionate moments. Her more intellectual poems will probably survive those which are primarily of feeling, unusual as this may seem. There may be "thoughts beyond the thrall of words," but Miss Thomas dares to put into her energetic verse thoughts which to discipline into form has puzzled philosophers from the Greeks down. Single poems, "The Compass," "They Said," "Palingenesis," "The Soul of the Violet," "The Inverted Torch," "A Far Cry to Heaven," and others are among the treasured gems of our literature. An excursion through her many little volumes which have appeared

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from time to time all the way from 1885 until very recently, will reward with new and added beauty the truer poetic memories of one who will adventure among these little masterpieces of art and thought.

87. Gertrude Hall was a good novelist, and an excellent translator. In her original verse she is a poet of the quaint, the fanciful, the wistful. *Far From To-day*, *Allegretto*, and *The Age of Fairygold* are titles of three of her books, and in themselves the titles illustrate the content of the books.

88. Anna Hempstead Branch. — Three volumes by Anna Hempstead Branch, *The Shoes that Danced and Other Poems*, *The Heart of the Road and Other Poems*, and *Rose of the Wind* were written only for lovers of poetry; they will not compel the attention of the unwilling. The long poem entitled "Nimrod" in *Rose of the Wind* is, as its title suggests, a treatment of a very ancient myth, and is a subtly ingenious piece of work.

89. Josephine Preston Peabody. — In the poetry of Josephine Preston Peabody there is much of mystery, much of subtle guessing about the riddle of our life, much pursuing of elusive ideas. Yet all of it is handled not in fancifulness, but with imaginative power. Her best dramas, *Marlowe* and *The Piper*, we have already briefly discussed. The lyric verse, together with some dramatic dialogue, is contained in the volumes under titles of *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, *The Wayfarers*, *Singing Leaves*, and *The Harvest Moon*. The last is dedicated "To the Women of Europe." We have learned to expect only the true, the beautiful, and the pure in her delicate yet energetic verse.

90. William Vaughn Moody's untimely death deprived us of one who promised greatness in poetry as in drama. The *Departure*, *Heart O' Wild Flower*, and many other lyrics reveal the nature-seer, the psychologist, and the musician; and *An Ode in Time of Hesitation* reveals Moody as strongly grasping profound moral truth and as being very nearly an

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author of major poetry. The ode is a mono-drama, in which the actor is the poet himself, and a prophet, though one never disobedient to the heavenly vision of structural law. Moody's poems call one back to them, for the melodies are haunting, the thought fascinating; one feels that here more is said than meets the eye, more that one wants to hear, and to hear again and again.

91. Mary McNeil Fenollosa. — Many Americans have lately come to the appreciation of Japanese art, and have been helped to that appreciation partly by the verse of Mrs. Mary McNeil Fenollosa, who resided in Japan for eight years, and whose lovely lilting lyrics constantly delight those who know them. "To a Japanese Nightingale" and "An Eastern Cry" will give a hint of the quality of the fashioning of her pictures as they are drawn in her Oriental poems, a quality vital, impulsive, fully musical, and faintly melancholy.

92. E. A. Robinson. — *The Town Down the River* (1910) is the volume containing the best known poems of Edward Arlington Robinson. He is frequently characterized as our present-day poet's poet, so much have his melodies stimulated contemporary writers of verse. It is a relief to turn to him from the horde of imitators who claim to be inventing hitherto unknown types of rhythm. Robinson neither abandons metrical forms nor hesitates to create new music for new ideas.

Robert Frost

93. Robert Frost's *North of Boston*, which appeared in 1914, was welcomed by readers of poetry for its breadth of sympathy and its depth of insight into the hearts and minds of men. The poems in this volume gave evidence also of

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dramatic power so strong that the hope has often been expressed that Frost would apply his gifts to drama as he has so successfully to the lyric. Many of his lyrics, such as *Mending the Wall* and *After Apple-Picking*, have already become household poems.

Our better magazines and weekly periodicals are frequently kept in the path of a fine tradition by the verse, still chiefly fugitive, which poets occasionally contribute. An anthology from magazines of the past thirty years, though it were of verse as yet unpublished in book form, would fill a large volume, however exacting of quality the anthologist might be. Furthermore, if poetry is "emotion remembered in tranquillity," we may expect from young men of ability who have lived through the strenuous days of the past decade much able poetry.

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BEST BOOKS ON THE LITERATURE OF THE PRESENT DAY

Some American Story-Tellers, FREDERIC TABOR COOPER. (Henry Holt and Company.)

Literature and Insurgency, JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD. (Mitchell Kennerley.)

Social Historians, H. A. TOULMIN. (Richard G. Badger.)

Who's Who in America, A. N. MARQUIS. (A. N. Marquis and Company.)

The Younger American Poets, JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE. (Little, Brown, and Company.)

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry, AMY LOWELL. (The Macmillan Company.)

A Manual of American Literature, JAMES B. SMILEY. (American Book Company.)

The Poetry of American Wit and Humor, R. L. PAGET [pseud. for Frederic Lawrence Knowles]. (L. C. Page and Company.)

Literary Boston of To-Day, HELEN M. WINSLOW. (L. C. Page and Company.)

Modern American Poetry, LOUIS UNTERMEYER. (Harcourt, Brace and Company.)

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TABLE OF AUTHORS

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THE COLONIAL ERA — 1607 to 1763

1. 1607 to 1676

Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
			PROSE WRITERS	
John Pory	1570	1635	Letters	1621
Alexander Whitaker	—	1617	Good News from Virginia	1613
George Sandys	1577	1644	Translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses	1626
John Smith	1579	1631	A True Relation of Virginia	1608
Nathaniel Ward	1579	1652	The Simple Cobler of Aggawamm	1646
George Percy	—	—	Discourse of the Plantations in Virginia	1607
William Strachey	—	—	A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates	1610
John Winthrop	1587	1649	History of New England	1649
William Bradford	1590	1657	History of Plymouth Plantation	1646
Thomas Morton	1594	1646	New English Canaan	1637
William Wood	—	—	New England's Prospect	1634
Roger Williams	1604	1683	The Bloody Tenet of Persecution	1644
Daniel Gookin	1612	1687	Historical Collections of Indians in New England	1674
George Alsop	1638	—	A Character of the Province of Maryland	1666
John Hammond	—	—	Leah and Rachel	1656
John Josselyn	—	—	New England's Rarities	1672
			VERSE WRITERS	
Mrs. Anne Bradstreet	1612	1672	The Tenth Muse	1656
Michael Wigglesworth	1631	1705	The Day of Doom	1662

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2. 1676 to 1763

Prose

Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
			The Burwell Papers	1676
Samuel Sewall	1652	1730	The Selling of Joseph	1700
Cotton Mather	1663	1728	Magnalia Christi Americana	1702
William Byrd	1674	1744	The History of the Dividing Line	1729
Robert Beverley	1675	1716	History and Present State of Virginia	1705
Jonathan Edwards	1703	1758	Freedom of the Will	1754
Benjamin Franklin	1706	1790	Poor Richard's Almanac	1732–1748

Verse

Thomas Godfrey, Jr.	1736	1763	The Prince of Parthia	1763

II

THE ERA OF THE REVOLUTION — 1763 to 1800

1. 1763 to 1789

Prose

Jonathan Mayhew	1720	1766	Letter Concerning Union of the Colonies	1766
John Woolman	1720	1772	Journal	1772
James Otis	1725	1783	The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved	1764
J. Hector St. John de Crevecœur	1731	1813	Letters of an American Farmer	1782
John Dickinson	1732	1808	Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania	1767–1768
John Adams	1735	1828	Letters	—
Thomas Paine	1737	1809	Common Sense	1776
Thomas Jefferson	1743	1826	Declaration of Independence	1776
James Madison	1751	1836	Federalist Papers	1787–1788
Alexander Hamilton	1757	1804	Federalist Papers	1787–1788

Verse

Francis Hopkinson	1737	1791	Battle of the Kegs	1778
John Trumbull	1750	1831	McFingal	1785
Philip Freneau	1752	1832	The Indian Burying-Ground	1778
Phillis Wheatley	1753	1784	Poems	1773
Joel Barlow	1754	1812	The Vision of Columbus	1787

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2. 1789 to 1800

Prose

Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
Benjamin Franklin...	1706	1790	Autobiography Published..	1791
George Washington...	1732	1799	Farewell Address	1796
Thomas Paine.....	1737	1809	The Rights of Man	1792

Verse

Timothy Dwight.....	1752	1817	Greenfield Hill.....	1794

III

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY — 1800 to 1837

1. 1800 to 1815

Prose

Charles Brockden Browne.....	1771	1810	Edgar Huntley.....	1801
James Kirke Paulding	1779	1860	Salmagundi Papers.....	1807–1808
Washington Irving...	1783	1859	Knickerbocker's History of New York.....	1809

Verse

Francis Scott Key....	1779	1843	The Star-Spangled Banner....	1814

2. 1815 to 1837

Prose

William Austin.....	1778	1841	Peter Rugg, the Missing Man.	1824
John James Audubon.	1780	1851	Birds of America.....	1827–1830
Washington Irving...	1783	1859	The Sketch-Book.....	1820
James Fenimore Cooper	1789	1851	The Spy.....	1821
John Pendleton Kennedy.....	1795	1870	Swallow-Barn.....	1832
Ralph Waldo Emerson	1803	1882	Nature.....	1836
William Gilmore Simms	1806	1870	The Yemassee.....	1835
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.....	1807	1882	Outre-Mer.....	1835

Verse

Richard Henry Dana, Sr.....	1787	1879	The Buccaneers.....	1827
Richard Henry Wilde	1789	1847	"My Life is Like the Summer Rose".....	1815

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Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
Fitz-Greene Halleck..	1790	1867	Marco Bozzaris.....	1827
William Cullen Bryant	1794	1878	Thanatopsis.....	1817
Joseph Rodman Drake	1795	1820	The Culprit Fay.....	1835
Oliver Wendell Holmes	1809	1894	The Last Leaf.....	1836

IV

THE MID-CENTURY

1837 to 1861

Prose

Daniel Webster.....	1782	1852	Reply to Hayne.....	1830
Augustus Baldwin Longstreet.....	1790	1870	Georgia Scenes and Characters	1840
William Hickling Prescott.....	1796	1859	Conquest of Mexico.....	1843
George Bancroft.....	1800	1891	History of the United States (Ten Volumes).....	1835–1874
Ralph Waldo Emerson	1803	1882	The American Scholar.....	1837
Nathaniel Hawthorne.	1804	1864	The Scarlet Letter.....	1850
Nathaniel P. Willis...	1807	1867	Pencillings by the Way.....	1835
Edgar Allan Poe.....	1809	1849	Ligeia.....	1839
Oliver Wendell Holmes	1809	1894	The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.....	1858
Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe.....	1811	1896	Uncle Tom's Cabin.....	1852
John Lothrop Motley.	1814	1877	The Rise of the Dutch Republic	1856
Richard Henry Dana, Jr.....	1815	1882	Two Years Before the Mast..	1840
Henry David Thoreau	1817	1862	Walden.....	1854
Donald Grant Mitchell	1822	1908	Reveries of a Bachelor.....	1850
George William Curtis	1824	1892	Prue and I.....	1856

Verse

Ralph Waldo Emerson	1803	1882	The Rhodora.....	1847
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.....	1807	1882	Hiawatha.....	1853
John Greenleaf Whittier	1807	1892	Kossuth.....	1851
Edgar Allan Poe.....	1809	1849	The Raven.....	1845
Josiah Gilbert Holland	1819	1881	Bitter Sweet.....	1858
James Russell Lowell.	1819	1891	The Vision of Sir Launfal.....	1848
Mrs. Julia Ward Howe	1819	1910	Battle Hymn of the Republic.	1861
Bayard Taylor.....	1825	1878	Bedouin Love-Song.....	1855

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V

THE ERA OF NATIONALISM

1861 to 1890

Prose

Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
Abraham Lincoln....	1809	1865	Dedicatory Address at Gettysburg.....	1863
Oliver Wendell Holmes	1809	1894	Elsie Venner.....	1864
James Russell Lowell.	1819	1891	Democracy.....	1887
Richard Malcolm Johnston.....	1822	1898	Dukesborough Tales.....	1871
Edward Everett Hale.	1822	1909	The Man Without a Country.	1870
Francis Parkman.....	1823	1893	The Old Régime in Canada...	1874
Charles Dudley Warner	1829	1900	My Summer in a Garden.....	1870
Lewis Wallace.....	1829	1905	Ben Hur: a Tale of the Christ	1880
Helen Hunt Jackson..	1831	1885	Ramona.....	1884
Louisa May Alcott...	1832	1888	Little Women.....	1868
Charles Farrar Browne	1834	1867	Artemus Warde, His Book....	1862
Francis Richard Stockton	1834	1902	The Lady, or the Tiger.....	1884
Samuel L. Clemens...	1835	1910	The Innocents Abroad.....	1869
Thomas Bailey Aldrich	1836	1907	Marjorie Daw.....	1873
Edward Eggleston....	1837	1902	The Hoosier Schoolmaster....	1871
John Burroughs.....	1837	1921	Pepacton.....	1881
William Dean Howells	1837	1920	The Rise of Silas Lapham....	1885
Francis Bret Harte...	1839	1902	The Luck of Roaring Camp...	1870
Henry James.....	1843	1916	Daisy Miller.....	1878
George Washington Cable.....	1844	—	Old Creole Days.....	1879
Joel Chandler Harris.	1848	1908	Uncle Remus; His Songs and His Sayings.....	1880
Sarah Orne Jewett...	1849	1909	A Country Doctor.....	1884
Frances Hodgson Burnett.....	1849	—	Little Lord Fauntleroy.....	1886
Mary N. Murfree....	1850	—	In the Tennessee Mountains..	1884
Thomas Nelson Page.	1853	—	Marse Chan.....	1884

Verse

William Cullen Bryant	1794	1878	The Little People of the Snow.	1864
Ralph Waldo Emerson	1803	1882	Days.....	1867
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.....	1807	1882	Tales of the Wayside Inn	1863–1873

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Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
John Greenleaf Whittier	1807	1892	Snow-Bound	1866
James Russell Lowell.	1819	1891	Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration	1865
Walt Whitman	1819	1892	O Captain! My Captain!	1870
Francis Orrery Ticknor	1822	1874	Little Giffen	1867
Bayard Taylor	1825	1878	The Masque of the Gods	1872
Richard Henry Stoddard	1825	1903	Abraham Lincoln: a Horatian Ode	1865
Paul Hamilton Hayne.	1831	1886	Aspects of the Pines	1872
Edmund Clarence Stedman	1833	1908	Pan in Wall Street	—
Thomas Bailey Aldrich	1836	1907	Mercedes	1883
Edward Rowland Sill.	1841	1887	A Foolish Wish	1872
Sidney Lanier	1842	1881	The Symphony	1875
Richard Watson Gilder	1844	1909	The Sonnet	—

VI

THE PRESENT DAY

1890 — ——

Prose

Silas Weir Mitchell	1829	1914	Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker	1897
Samuel Langhorne Clemens	1835	1910	Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc	1896
John Burroughs	1837	1921	Literary Values	1904
William Dean Howells	1837	1920	The World of Chance	1893
Francis Hopkinson Smith	1838	—	Colonel Carter of Cartersville.	1891
John Muir	1838	1914	The Mountains of California	1894
Henry Adams	1838	1918	The Education of Henry Adams	1918
Alfred Thayer Mahan.	1840	1914	The Influence of Sea Power upon History	1890
John Fiske	1842	1901	The Discovery of America	1892
William James	1842	1910	The Will to Believe	1897
Henry James	1843	1916	The Real Thing	1893
James Lane Allen	1849	—	Two Gentlemen of Kentucky.	1891
Lafcadio Hearn	1850	1904	Kotto	1902
Henry van Dyke	1852	—	The Story of the Other Wise Man	1896
Robert Grant	1852	—	Unleavened Bread	1900
Thomas Nelson Page.	1853	—	Meh Lady	1896

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Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
Francis Marion Crawford	1854	1909	A Cigarette-Maker's Romance	1890
Josiah Royce	1855	1916	The World and the Individual	1900
Henry Cuyler Bunner	1855	1896	A Sisterly Scheme	1891
Woodrow Wilson	1856	—	Mere Literature, and Other Essays	1896
Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart	1856	—	Napoleon Jackson, The Gentlemen of the Plush Rocker	1902
Herman K. Vielé	1856	1908	The Inn of the Silver Moon	1901
Gertrude Atherton	1857	—	The Splendid Idle Forties	1902
Margaret Deland	1857	—	The Iron Woman	1911
Samuel McChord Crothers	1857	—	The Gentle Reader	1903
Alice Brown	1857	—	Meadow-Grass	1895
Kate Douglas Wiggin	1857	—	The Old Peabody Pew	1907
Agnes Repplier	1857	—	Points of Friction	1920
Owen Wister	1860	—	The Virginian	1902
Hamlin Garland	1860	—	Main-Traveled Roads	1890
Mary E. Wilkins Freeman	1862	—	Silence and Other Stories	1898
Mrs. Edith Wharton	1862	—	Ethan Frome	1911
Paul Elmer More	1864	—	Shelburne Essays	1904
William Clyde Fitch	1865	1909	Beau Brummel	1908
William Sydney Porter	1867	1910	A Municipal Report	1910
David Graham Phillips	1867	1911	The Second Generation	1907
William Allen White	1868	—	A Certain Rich Man	1909
Mary Austin	1868	—	The Arrow Maker	1911
Charles D. Stewart	1868	—	Partners of Providence	1907
Robert Herrick	1868	—	The Master of the Inn	1908
William Vaughn Moody	1869	1910	The Faith Healer	1909
Newton Booth Tarkington	1869	—	Monsieur Beaucaire	1900
Frank Norris	1870	1902	The Pit	1902
Stephen Crane	1871	1900	The Red Badge of Courage	1895
Winston Churchill	1871	—	Coniston	1906
Eleanor Hallowell Abbott	1872	—	The White Linen Nurse	1913
Anne Sedgwick	1873	—	The Encounter	1914
Ellen Glasgow	1874	—	The Miller of Old Church	1911
Dorothy Canfield	1879	—	The Bent Twig	1915
Ernest Poole	1880	—	The Harbor	1915
Henry Sydnor Harrison	1880	—	Queed	1911
Joseph Hergesheimer	1880	—	Java Head	1919
James Oppenheim	1882	—	Pay Envelopes	1911
Sinclair Lewis	1885	—	Main Street	1920
Percival Wilde	1887	—	The Unseen Host	1917

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VERSE

Author	*Born*	*Died*	*A Representative Work*	*Its Date*
John Greenleaf Whittier	1807	1892	To Oliver Wendell Holmes....	1892
John Banister Tabb..	1845	1900	Lyrics.....	1897
Lloyd Mifflin.....	1846	—	As Twilight Falls.....	1916
James Whitcomb Riley	1849	1916	Longfellow.....	1892
Eugene Field.....	1850	1895	With Trumpet and Drum....	1892
Edwin Markham.....	1852	—	Lincoln.....	1901
Edith M. Thomas....	1854	—	The Inverted Torch.....	1890
George Edward Woodberry.....	1855	—	The North Shore Watch.....	1890
Lizette Woodworth Reese.....	1856	—	A Handful of Lavender.....	1891
Alice Brown.....	1857	—	The Road to Castaly.....	1917
Frank Dempster Sherman.....	1860	1916	Little Folk Lyrics.....	1897
Gertrude Hall.....	1863	1915	The Age of Fairygold.....	1894
Clinton Scollard.....	1860	—	The Lyric Bough.....	1904
Richard Hovey.....	1864	1900	Unmanifest Destiny.....	1898
Madison J. Cawein...	1865	1914	Undertones.....	1896
Frederic Lawrence Knowles.....	1869	1905	A Song of Desire.....	1904
William Vaughn Moody	1869	1910	The Masque of Judgment....	1900
Edward Arlington Robinson.....	1869	—	The Town Down the River...	1910
Cale Young Rice.....	1872	—	Earth and New Earth.....	1916
Paul Laurence Dunbar	1872	1906	Lyrics of Lowly Life.....	1896
Josephine Preston Peabody.....	1874	—	The Piper.....	1909
Robert Frost.....	1875	—	North of Boston.....	1914
Joyce Kilmer.....	1886	1918	Main Street, and Other Poems	1917
Alan Seeger.....	1888	1916	I Have a Rendezvous with Death	1916
Olive Tilford Dargan.	—	—	Lords and Lovers.....	1906
Anna Hempstead Branch.....	—	—	Rose of the Wind.....	1910
Mary McNeil Fenollosa	—	—	Out of the Nest.....	1899

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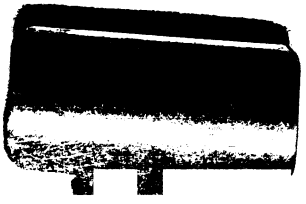

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